

**The Academy of Religion
and Psychical Research**

1980 Annual Conference

PROCEEDINGS

**MYSTICISM
AND OTHER
TRANSFORMATIVE
STATES OF
CONSCIOUSNESS**

The Academy of Religion and Psychical Research

P. O. Box 614 • Bloomfield, Connecticut 06002

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MYSTICISM AND OTHER TRANSFORMATIVE
STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
SIXTH ANNUAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE
OF THE
ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

May 24 AND 25, 1980
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Edited by Mary Carman Rose

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Dedicated to
WALTER HOUSTON CLARK
PRESIDENT
OF THE
ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHIC RESEARCH:
1972-1980

ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH
ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP (As filed November, 1983)

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Boyce Batey, Executive Secretary

PREFACE

This volume presents the lectures and much of the discussion which comprised the sixth annual conference of the Academy of Religion and Psychical Research, held in Chicago, Ill., May 24 and 25, 1980. Because of a variety of circumstances these Proceedings have not been edited and printed until 1983. One advantage of this timing, however, is that at present it is possible to achieve a valuable perspective on this work which was not as clear in 1980 as it is now, although during the actual reading of these papers and the carrying on of the discussion some of the distinctive value of the contributions of those individuals who shaped the depth and quality of the whole was immediately apparent to me.

Of course, apparent to any one who read the program was the variety of topics which expressed interest in the many facets of the conference theme: "Mysticism and other transformative states of consciousness." Thus, there were papers on altered states of consciousness produced by spiritual aspiration and meditative practises as well as those produced by drugs. And there were papers on altered states of consciousness which accompany out-of-the-body experiences or near-death-experiences and those which during every day waking consciousness occur spontaneously and unexpectedly.

Because 1980 marked the end of the eight year period during which Walter Houston Clark, Professor Emeritus of Psychology of Religion, Andover Newton Theological Seminary, served the Academy as President, this volume is dedicated to him. As anyone who knows Professor Clark would expect, his contributions to the Conference drew attention to his pioneering work with drugs, notably peyote and LSD, in respect to their effects on consciousness, spiritual change, and spiritual development. Because I know that a few members of the Academy have shared my experience of learning about these topics from Professor Clark, I will put on record here some of my own past attitudes toward work with drug induced changes of consciousness and therapeutic processes. When I first became interested in the Academy I knew nothing of Professor Clark's work or of work with drugs in psychic research and studies of mysticism. I did, however, have a fear of what possibly might be long term deleterious effects of these drugs. I also had a very great impatience with what seemed to me to be a too easy optimism and hopefulness concerning the effects of drug use.

Now, largely through my having listened to many papers on this topic by Professor Clark and others, I have some education in respect to this topic. I still fear there may be as yet undiscerned effects of drugs. And I still have the impatience with what continues to be here and there an ill-founded optimism concerning drugs. There is, however, one important conclusion to which I have come. I am convinced of Walter Clark's integrity, good will, and kindness in all aspects of his professional activity. And I have admired his reason for his conviction of the beneficent possibilities of some drug use. He often recounts how the peyote he ingested made him more forgiving and charitable and more aware of and careful of the legitimate needs and desires of others than he had been before. These are, of course, investigatively very valuable data.

Just as important, however, is that fact that they show Professor Clark in a very beneficent light. Through the education in this topic which I have received from Professor Clark, who is now my good friend and colleague, I am convinced that the widespread use of drugs in religious and quasi-religious ceremonies throughout the world will repay our sympathetic, undistorted, non-reductive examination.

Also noteworthy were the individual participants in the 1980 Conference. This last became increasingly clear to me during the Conference. In academic meetings, as a rule, there is a tendency on the part of speakers to leave their personal experiences, interests, and extra-academic concerns out of their presentations. At this academic conference, however, each person--I suspect there were few, if any, exceptions to this--who read, or responded to, a paper; who contributed to the formal discussion which was part of the program; or who entered into the dialogue which was continuous during the conference, was holistically involved. Thus we learned a great deal about each other's interests in psychic research, religion, and mysticism. These personal touches seemed to me to have considerable historical value, and in editing this material I was careful to leave them all in.

Now, three years later, what can be said about the papers and discussions in the 1980 Proceedings? Certainly the generous attitudes toward the many facets, depth, and extent of psychic research have remained and, in fact have developed in Academy Conferences. Is there any respect in which we have made progress in our Conferences? I wish to answer this question in the affirmative, although it is to be expected that some members of the Academy will find less progress than I do or will find progress in different areas from those which I emphasize. I suggest that a number of interests which were expressed in the 1980 Conference develop in the Proceedings of the next three years and that these are topics on which the participants have at least implicitly worked together. One is the growing recognition of and interest in the need for novel, distinctive methodological procedures for real breakthrough in psychic research. There is also a growing sense of the pioneer work involved in this area. And there is growing emphasis on the attitudinal and spiritual dimensions of preparation for work in these fields.

Mary Carman Rose

MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE: TRANSCENDENCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Walter Houston Clark

Abstract. The author defends the view that all persons are potentially mystics. He cites as evidence the facts that mysticism exists among persons of all faiths and of no faith and that it is feasible to argue that there is a shared core of mystical experience. He explores the transcendence of mystical experiences, the situations which trigger these experiences, and their transforming effects.

In The Meaning of God in Human Experience William Ernest Hocking, late Harvard philosopher, speaks of mysticism as "a great historic phenomenon, found everywhere that religion is found" (1912, 350). William James, another Harvard philosopher wrote that "mysticism is the mother sea and fountainhead of all religions" (Allen, 1967, 425). Since these are also my convictions I am quoting these thinkers as a kind of keynote to the keynote address with which the program committee honored me in asking me to give it.

The world of consciousness may be compared to a frozen lake. Most of our conscious lives are spent gliding over its surface and mingling with the variety of companions skating with us. It is only when we break through that we become aware of the depths, threatening or exhilarating, on which the smooth icy surface has been riding. It is these depths, the vast chambers of the unconscious that possess, along with the possibility of chaos and madness, the creative energies so often held in check by the timid activities of the conventional majority who thus keep to the even tenor of their way. What concerns us in this meeting is not the usual but the unusual, for however desirable and usual that mystical experience might be, as a matter of fact it is relatively rare, even though not as rare as most of us suppose. It is usually seen as a breaking through from the depths, an eruption from the unconscious, to the individual sometimes very frightening and at other times immensely comforting. But no matter how disrupting to their lives few mystics, if any, whether believers or atheists, would disown and reject an experience that they see as lifting them to a higher and more creative level of consciousness. W.T. Stace (1960), one of the most thorough and perceptive students of mysticism, sees the mystic as perceiving his experience as unifying, timeless and spaceless, objectively real, blessed and peaceful, sacred, paradoxical and ineffable. He will tell his nonmystical brother that to describe the experience to him is impossible, as difficult as describing a sunset to one born blind. He is forced to use figures of speech from which we can understand why the mystics tend to be the most eloquent poets of the religious life.

Because of the rarity of mystical experience can we also deduce that most of us are incapable of it? I do not think so.

It is my conviction that, however, deeply buried, the mystical capacity sleeps within all of us just as related capacities like poetic and artistic gifts lie potentially within all of us. Who has not experienced the poetic frame of mind at least once when one was in love, regardless of whether a deathless love poem was put down on paper or not?

I have become convinced of the universality of the mystical potentiality on the basis of just one investigation. As anyone knows who has had much to do with the psychedelic chemicals they are catalysts which, as Aristotle maintained, taught one nothing but supplied a memorable experience which showed things already there. Whatever intellectual substance there is associated with psychedelic chemicals and plants comes from their ability to release from the unconscious the capacities of the ingester. They are a developer that brings out the hidden picture on a photographic film. I devised a questionnaire once on which I asked those who had experienced the chemicals, whether synthetic or present in some form of plant life, to report their experiences. Some of the questions were derived from Stace. I then gave it to 100 volunteers. Though I judged that many of these subjects had taken the psychedelics for irresponsible and frivolous reasons there was not a single one of the hundred who did not report positively on one or more of Stace's categories of mystical experience.

Another piece of data that seems to support my contention of the universality of mystical capacity in all people is that Stace discovered that mysticism existed among persons of all faiths or of no faith and in all historical ages. In all of the traditions that he studied he found the same tendency among mystics to report the characteristics I have just cited. These characteristics he calls "the universal core of mysticism." The fact that among those who report intense mystical experiences this core seems to differ among them so slightly gives further support to my conviction that the source of mysticism is not any particular teaching but that it is inherent among all humans.

The Transcendence of Mysticism. When we consider what mysticism can accomplish, the first thing that comes to mind is its capability of enabling a person to transcend or "go beyond himself" in some unexpected and unexplained way. Marghanita Laski in her study of the mystical dimension *Ecstasy* (1962, p. 256) cites the case of the reaction of a sick man to a religious broadcast in a letter of testimony as follows:

Once when I was seriously ill and not expected to recover, I experienced that spiritual elation and awareness of the presence of God described in your broadcast. It seemed to me afterwards, when I could reason coldly and clearly, that as the body sank into nothingness, the spirit strengthened and would survive.

In that strange but great spiritual autobiography, Sartor Resartus, Thomas Carlyle tells of a transcendence that came over him as a young man when he walked along a street in Edinburgh after a period of suffering and self pity following the rejection

of his religious beliefs. He had found his inwardness overwhelmed with a nameless fear the source of which he could not fathom. Suddenly out of nowhere came the decision to face himself:

...what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will, or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!" And as I thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. . . .

It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometric Fire-Baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man.

With his eyes opened by this and other experiences of a more mystical nature he becomes capable of writing what is probably the finest chapter in the book, titled "Natural Supernaturalism," framed against the concept of timelessness and Eternity, in which are contained these excerpts:

...could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? . . . what else are we? Are we not spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a simple, scientific fact: we start out of nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us as round the veriest spectre, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and aeons. . . .

Thus like a God-created, fire breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are leveled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and more alive? On the hardest adamant some foot-print of us is stamped in; the last rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence? - O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God to God.

"We are such stuff

As dreams are made on, and our little Life
Is rounded with a sleep!"

These passages from Carlyle, better than a stodgy definition, give us an idea of how transcendence evolves from out of mysticism as well as presaging transformation, the end result of mysticism. But before I take up that subject, let me say a few words about what Laski calls the "triggers" of mysticism. What conditions favor it?

Triggers of Mysticism. The term "triggers" I have stolen from Laski's excellent study Ecstasy, Ecstasy is a term which overlaps "mysticism" and comes close to being the same thing. She starts her discussion by considering "anti-triggers," conditions that lessen the chances of mysticism, like ugliness, the presence of too many people, particularly talkative ones, and crass commercialism. The latter has about the same chance of triggering a mystical experience as the rhyming radio commercials have of creating undying poetry no matter how fulsome the vocabulary of their creators. Perhaps a routine church ritual or a tightly reasoned discussion of theologians would have the same chance of leading constituents into the paths of mystical spirituality. It is because the activities are, so to speak, kept on top of the frozen lake I have proposed as the surface on which most human transactions are carried on. They have little connection with the roots of mysticism, which are deeply rooted in the unconscious. It follows then that most mystical experiences creep on one in mysterious ways over which the intentional will seems to have little control, sometimes in the middle of meditation.

One of the most pregnant stimuli for mystical experience is to be found in various aspects of nature. Moses in Exodus receives his most powerful ecstasies in the wilderness and on the heights of Mount Sinai. The vastness of the sea and the monotony of it suggests both the feeling of unity and the timelessness reported by mystics, and this may be the reason why the sea is often a trigger. Fasting has always appealed to the mystics for it often seems to precede a mystical experience, perhaps because of hormonal changes brought about in the blood stream. Reading about mysticism has often suggested it. I have known more than one whose contact with the writings of William James have apparently suggested the experience. One of these was a middle-aged college professor whose family had provided her with no religious background. Nevertheless, she had a mystical experience while she was in the middle of reading The Varieties of Religious Experience, which changed her life.

Then there is stress of various kinds, like that developed by Sufis in such exercises as the dances carried on by the whirling dervishes. Another kind of stress is that developing from danger perceived to be imminent. This was the case with Arthur Koestler, who had been captured by the Fascists in the civil war in Spain when he was in prison and expected soon to be shot. In The Invisible Writing he tells us in an instructive and eloquent passage, how he was working on a mathematical problem when he suddenly experienced an altered state of consciousness. He writes:

Then I was floating on my back in a river of peace under bridges of silence. It came from nowhere and flowed nowhere. Then there was no river and no I. The I had ceased to exist. . . When I say "the I had ceased to exist" I refer to a concrete experience. . . The I ceases to exist because it has, by a kind of mental osmosis, established communication with, and been dissolved in, the universal pool. It is this process of dissolution and limitless expansion which is sensed as the "oceanic" feeling, as the draining of all tension, the absolute catharsis, the peace that passeth all understanding.

In this far from exhaustive list of triggers for mystical experience there remains for discussion the controversial trigger of psychedelic drugs. Most, but not all, ingesters of these drugs in my questionnaire survey saw their experiences as religious though, as I have said, each of the 100 who filled out questionnaires reported experiencing at least one (and usually many more) of Stace's mystical categories. As those of you who have read my Chemical Ecstasy already know, I am on the side of those who, like Stace and William James, see the psychedelic experience as genuinely mystical. It is harder to say whether this type of mysticism is genuinely religious. I open Chemical Ecstasy with the story of the armed robber who up to that point had been in and out of prison all his life. In a vision under psilocybin he saw a vision of Christ which turned his life around so that afterward he helped to found an organization to keep himself and others to stay out of jail. I find it hard to deny to this hardened criminal the term religious.

Yet the results are not always so salutary, especially with the casual use of psychedelics, though they are not nearly so dangerous as most people think (Grinspoon, 1979). I think I am putting the case for psychedelics as triggers of both mysticism and religion conservatively when I say that certainly there are many positive reports on both of these scores. The results are religious particularly when the environment is religious, as in the case of Pahnke's Harvard Good Friday experiment, where participants saw their experiences as both mystical and religious. Certainly this is the case with the Indians in the Americas who use psychedelic plants religiously (Harner, 1973), and was the case with those initiated into the celebrated Eleusinian Mysteries in ancient Greece (Wasson, 1978). Grof (1977) came to a similar conclusion in his use of LSD to aid cancer patients to face death. Readers will find views differing from mine - at least in part - in Zaehner's Mysticism: Sacred and Profane and in Laski's volume (Ibid.).

One of the chief reasons many have for rejecting the psychedelics as a road to mysticism is that it is thought that such a great gift should exact a price. Swallowing a pill is too easy a gate through which to enter the kingdom of Heaven. But such arguments forget the doctrine of grace. I might have complained

on hearing the story of the armed robber that though I had dutifully attended church many times in my long life, I never had had a vision of Christ even after ingesting a psychedelic, while my criminal acquaintance had never attended church in his life except when he thought he had something to gain through going through religious motions. What right did Christ have to favor this malefactor with a vision while he completely neglected me? The answer is that the ways of the Lord are mysterious and Grace is not portioned out strictly according to merit, as we see merit, much as goods are apportioned in any store in accordance with whether one has the proportionate price.

Nevertheless I do not favor drugs as necessarily the best road to mysticism. If one has achieved a mystical state after years of strict spiritual discipline he is more apt to appreciate and follow it up after this long and arduous quest. Whether from the fear of radically facing the fears that crowd the unconscious and even facing the madness that so many psychiatrists predict, or from the laudable desire to obey the laws of the country, there are many good reasons for staying away from the psychedelics. Though I myself favor their use when in the right hands I have noticed that with those who take them lightly and too often, the edge is taken off even their capacity for good. There is no best way of arriving at mystical goals and each person must choose his own way and pay whatever the cost in time, discipline, or follow-up.

Transformation. The "pay-off" or ultimate test of a transcendent experience is not to be found so much in the excitement or satisfaction of the experience itself as in its consequences. This is what usually is meant when we hear people say that they have been converted or "re-born". A "rebirth" can range everywhere from a shallow repetition of these terms learned from someone else to an inner change about which the individual himself has no doubt and so thorough that under no circumstances would one go back to one's old self whether one's family and friends approved of it or not. Yet family and friends do eventually notice the effects of the experiences. Then, at least in the long run, they do approve, as those the world have called mahatmas, prophets, or saints testify. But the most thorough type of mystical experience radically changes values, habits, aims, and purposes. It is a breaking through the smooth surface of the so comfortably known life of practicality, business, and common sense. This is one of the reasons the mere thought of a deeply felt mystical experience so terrifies us. Moses immediately began to offer excuses when the terrifying commands issued from the burning bush, while Jeremiah protested when he felt the Lord's word as "a burning fire" shut up in his bones.

And it is the very suddenness of this breaking through that fertilizes the sleeping poetic and mystical capacities that lie within us. In describing his mystical experience the Medieval brother Jan Van Ruysbroeck put it this way: "This is the dark silence in which all lovers lose themselves. But if we prepare ourselves for it. . . we should strip ourselves of all but our

very bodies, and we should flee forth into the wild sea, whence no created thing can draw us back again." At the same time the living experience of unity of all things and all people so affects the mystic that, as John Donne put it, he needs not send "to enquire for whom the bell tolls," for he knows it tolls for him!

At the same time this mystical transformation so acts on the mystic that energy is released for him to pursue his newly discovered values. One of the most obvious shortcomings of church people and theologians is the gap between ecclesiastical professions and ideals and actual everyday practice. William James was undoubtedly thinking of this gap when he finished the passage cited above about mysticism as the source of all religions with the words "all theologies and all ecclesiasticisms are secondary growths superimposed." Cardinal Newman also knew how frail mere pious thoughts and ideas were as compared to passion when he said, "Quarry the granite rock with razors or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then you may hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against these giants, the passion and the pride of man." (1947, 107) The key to a search for the Church's lost ideals was discovered by a weak woman, Teresa of Avila who, before her mystical vision was a sickly hypochondriac. But her mysticism unlocked the energy to circumvent conniving prelates to spend the rest of her life traveling through summer's heat and winter's cold to reform her convent and to found others in all parts of Spain (Underhill, 1955, 430).

A Warning. But once again we must not think that the mystical transformation by itself is for evermore efficient for the achievement of the good life. When I taught a course on mysticism I used to require my classes to read Grey Eminence (1959), Aldous Huxley's biographical study of Father Joseph, the Capuchin monk who spent his most active years as the foreign secretary and executive in the service of his master Cardinal Richelieu. Though a genuine mystic himself, and so with access to the amazing energy that mysticism releases, he deserted what at one time had been his aim, to found monasteries in Spain to train young men in mystical disciplines. Instead he made the mistake that theocratic governments, of yesterday and today and in all faiths, tend to make. This is to see a theological position and the power that accompanies it, instead of religious experience and loving relationships, the aim of a religious institution. Among Christianity's great failures were the Inquisition and the tacit complicity of both Catholics and Protestants in the Hitler terror of the last great war. There is no theological institution great or small, without members anxious to seize ecclesiastical power in order to use it in their own interests or what they consider the interests of the institution, which is much the same thing. They might well remember the fate of Father Joseph. No prelate of any stature was willing to preach the funeral sermon of this powerful and prominent mystic gone wrong! The energies released by mystical experience misdirected through theological rationalization kept Europe a battlefield and

then a grave yard over a period of thirty years. This same mysticism that we are celebrating in our Conference this year, so sublime and spiritually uplifting at its best, can be an ingredient in some of the cruelist chapters in our history. Can it be possible that the current Iranian Muslim hatred of the West may be in part a reaction to echoes of the Inquisition when Muslims were slaughtered by thousands under Grand Inquisitors like Francisco Ximenes, the zealous and incorruptible member of the order founded to honor the memory of the gentle Saint Francis?

But as I draw this keynote address to its close I am afraid that I may have confused some of you by seeming to speak out of both sides of my mouth. What I have been intending to do is to give you at least a hint of the complexity of our subject. Mysticism may be the road toward a transformation to a higher and nobler state of consciousness in singleminded and pure souls. In this form it is probably the only hope for a world on the brink of nuclear madness. But linked to a narrow and cruel theology it can be an ingredient in a veritable witches' brew of which we ourselves may one day be the victims. But both for its menace and its promise mysticism eminently deserves the scholarly attention that this, the academic arm of the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship is planning to give to it. We hope that the attention we will be giving to mysticism today and tomorrow will at least in some small way minimize the menace and increase the appreciation of its promise and help us in the words of William Blake:

To see the world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

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RESPONSE TO WALTER HOUSTON CLARK

L. RICHARD BATZLER

The title of Dr. Clark's paper, Mystical Experience: Transcendence and Transformation, is helpful in our understanding something of the meaning of his message. The meaning of the word experience is illuminated by its etymology. From the Latin experiens, which means to try, test, prove; the Latin periculum, trial, danger; and the Greek peros, a way through, and the Greek pereusthai, to go or march, we get the sense of passing through or living through with the possibility of danger and risk. The two words, transcendence and transformation, also afford insights into the dynamics and dimensions of the mystical. Transcendence means literally to climb beyond, which indicates the mystical path is one of ascension, of rising above oneself. Transformation is to form over, to change the character, nature or condition. It also means to alter, which literally is to become other. Thus the etymology of the title enables us to get right into the meat of mysticism which involves mountain-top moments, and new meanings, all of which can involve revelatory reaches to dark depths or sublime summits of the human spirit.

Dr. Clark rightly notes that although the mystical experience might well be usual -- one might even say natural -- it is relatively rare. In fact, all persons probably experience numerous mystical moments in some way, but most do not recognize them or integrate them into their everyday life. I believe -- along with many others -- that everyone is capable of the mystical experience and that the faculty for spiritual truth is as reliable and as natural as any organ of sensation. Humans are not creations over against God, but are made in God's image, united with God in essential nature and therefore participate in the divine life.

The transcendent aspect of mysticism has been articulated by many persons in poetry, prose, music, art and lives of service. In considering transcendence, however, we must be aware that transcendence embraces a number of steps or processes that bring one to the full mystical experience. There is not a leap-frogging from the human self here and now to a divine beyond-onself. These processes are described in a number of ways.

Roman Catholic theologians usually divided the process into three stages: purgation, illumination and union. This process is not always clearly defined and not always progressively forward. Many mystics speak of slippings back or regressions. Ruysbroeck classifies the movement of transcendence as the active life, the interior life and the superessential or God-seeing life, that of permanent attainment.¹ The Indian philosopher Radhakrishnan describes the path to perfection as purification, concentration and identification.² The Sufi mystic Farid al-din speaks of the seven valleys: the Valley of the Quest; Love; Knowledge and Enlightenment; Detachment; Unity,

Bewilderment and finally, the Valley of Annihilation.³ Rudolf Otto describes the character of the transcendental experience in the phrase mysterium tremendum et fascinans. The word mysterium implies the idea of Something wholly other than man; tremendum the idea of awefulness, overpoweringness and urgency; fascinans the idea of something which draws one in spite of one's self.⁴ The vision of the prophet Isaiah in the temple is an exciting example of transcendence and transformation in tandem.

The one who experiences transcendence is aware of his own littleness, unworthiness and ignorance of the Transcendent One. He is filled with awe, self-abasement; cannot know it, name it. The experience is the abyss, desert, wilderness, but paradoxically it is light, heavenly music, peace and the nothingness in which all is contained. This "space" where no one is at home is the long-sought-for home. The paradoxical and ineffable nature of this experience causes Carl Jung to write, "Every statement about the transcendental ought to be avoided because it is a laughable presumption on the part of the human mind, unconscious of its limitations."⁵ The possibilities for the mystical experience for all persons are shown by the triggers of mysticism which Dr. Clark mentions. Each of these triggers is, or can be, part of everyone's life experience, including the controversial psychedelic trip. I agree with Dr. Clark about the significance and the reservations he notes about the psychedelic experience as mystical.

I would like to add a few other triggers of mysticism. The new consciousness and developments in science can be strong triggering agents. Penetration of the macrocosm and microcosm by means of sophisticated instruments has given us new insights into infinite distances, numbers, arrangements and patterns which can lead one into the transcendent state. Theological theories such as Teilhard de Chardin's which pictures the shape of evolution as a process of expansive interiorization or Whitehead's process theology, a philosophical theology which speaks of God as Creative-Responsive love and emphasizes creative transformation provide triggers for transcendence and transformation. Parapsychological research (telepathy, OOB, precognition, clairvoyance, spirit communication, psychokinesis, etc.) provides pregnant possibilities for triggering one into the beyondness of time and space. Transpersonal psychologies and the special studies in consciousness are also opening new doors to the within and the beyond. Holistic healing movements, biofeedback, dream research, new sensitivity to energy systems within the body are all adding to the triggering of the mystical experience.

Transformation as a dimension of the mystical experience might be described as the mysticism of action or works. Throughout the history of mysticism there has been a tendency toward passivity or withdrawal from the active life of the world. The goal of the true mystic, however, is not to rest in pleasant sensations or solitude. "The true mystic is not like a cat basking in the sun, but like a mountaineer. At the end of the quest he finds not the enervating isle of the Lotus Eaters, but the sharp, pure air of the Mount of Transfiguration. The greatest contemplatives,

transfigured on this holy mountain, have felt themselves called upon to 'descend below themselves,' to take on the humility of Christ, ... and coming down to the plain, to become centers of creative energy and power in the world. ... Hidden in God, inflamed with the Divine Love, serene and confident they possess a creative strength and power, which ordinary men, tossed hither and thither by the passions of primitive self, do not possess."⁶

The Sermon on the Mount is an excellent expression of the transformation consciousness and the mysticism of action. To many, the Sermon is impractical idealism or a collection of unlivable moral percepts. To the mystic, the sermon is an acute analysis of right action in the light of reality as it really is. The same might be said about some of the writings in the Bhagavad Gita, the Song of God, from India. In this work Krishna, the Indian incarnation of God, when speaking about the consequences of the mystical way says, "The world is imprisoned in its own activity, except when actions are performed as worship of God. Therefore you must perform every action sacramentally and be free from all attachment to results."⁷ When one can do this, real transformation has occurred.

Today we live in a world where religious faith is declining. The multifaceted influence of contemporary culture greatly affects men's self-understanding and their apprehension of ultimate meaning. Rapid and extensive change, pluralism, the all-pervasive effects of science and technology tend to erode once-cherished beliefs, depersonalize human life and dull spiritual sensitivities.

In the midst of this foreboding future, I see people like ourselves as harbingers of hope, promoters of holiness and wholeness -- rather than hucksters of holocaust. We do this in part through our faith in and our walk along the mystic path which affirms that God is wise and loving and offers to lead us into the new life we need. God lures, urges, persuades. We decide. If we decide to enter the reality into which God calls us and into which the mystical way can lead us, we choose life. If we decide to not hear or heed God's call, we choose death, a perishing thought life and a contribution to the death of this planet. Hope grows with the ability to respond to God; despair grows with the self-chosen closing in of heavenly horizons. Our time together these few hours is our sharing in a divine adventure. May this adventure in some measure promote peace on earth and goodwill to all persons.

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In Honor of Walter H. Clark
Mary Jo Meadow

When Boyce Batey first approached me, suggesting that I deliver the address honoring Walter Houston Clark at this meeting, I was hesitant. Surely, I thought, there must be others who know in more detail the early years of his professional career who could present the historical facts in a more informed manner. However, I quickly backed off from that position, for--although Walter has produced important scholarship throughout his life--I wanted to be sure that Walter, the man, would not get lost in an accumulation of facts. And I am prepared to talk to you about Walter, the man, although I will also include a brief summary of the facts for those to whom such are important.

Walter was born in Westfield, New Jersey, on July 15, 1902, son of a lawyer father and a kindergarten teacher mother. This gives him a Sun in Cancer and--unless he was born quite late in the day, a moon in "wicked" Scorpio. Interestingly, these "water signs" of the zodiac are associated with mysticism and the unconscious. Walter's parents were churchgoers, who turned to the Presbyterian church after their Congregational minister tried to conceal his divorced status from his people. Although Walter considered himself somewhat more liberal in his religious views than his parents, he was raised on the King James Bible, which his mother loved.

Although he did not supply details about them, Walter told me that his boyhood was so checkered with "escapades" that he was finally sent off to a middle-class equivalent of a reform school, namely a college preparatory school. Here a dedicated Latin teacher led him to his first experience of the joy of learning. The present of a chemistry set turned his interests in that direction as he entered Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

Walter soon encountered his first major occasion for conversion, for accepting radical changes in his way of thinking and feeling. Here, in the Oxford Movement (or Moral Rearmament), he was turned to religion by a "born again" experience. Walter's capacity for commitment to values he has discovered led him, after an M.A. in English literature at Harvard, to teaching in the Episcopal Lenox School, in Lenox, Massachusetts. His favorite classes were a tenth grade Bible course, where he had the joy of interesting resistant fourteen and fifteen year-olds in the Bible, and a senior English course emphasizing Shakespeare and Carlyle--though, of Carlyle, Walter said: "At that time I would not have recognized a mystical experience had I seen it walking down the street."

However, for fifteen years Walter had puzzled over his own religious experience and had retained an interest in what had

happened to those in the Oxford Movement sharing such experiences with him. In 1941-42 he took a year off from teaching to study at Harvard. When he spoke with Gordon Allport about a dissertation on the Oxford Movement, he was warned that he would never get a doctorate with that topic. Walter simply replied that he was going to work on the topic anyway, and that it was okay with him if they did not accept it since he had no desire to slave over a subject that held no interest for him. His persistence brought Allport around to concluding that surely the university of William James should be able to provide for writing a dissertation on the psychology of religion. Allport arranged for Walter to write in the Graduate School of Education, as a history of education topic, on "The Oxford Group: Its Work in American Colleges." With both Allport and a mystic pursued by Hitler on his committee, Walter spent an enthusiastic and fascinating period of time working on this dissertation. A rewriting of it resulted in his first book: The Oxford Group: Its History and Significance, published in 1951.

After World War II, Walter went to Bowdoin College in Maine as a psychology instructor. He left after two years, since they were unwilling to promise that he could teach psychology of religion, and went to Middlebury College in Vermont, and then on to The Hartford School of Religious Education as Dean and Professor of Psychology. Here he wrote his second book: The Psychology of Religion, published in 1958.

Walter writes of the Hartford period of his life: "My thinking and behavior. . . pretty well conformed to the pattern to be expected of the typical WASP scholar devoted to the Western scientific tradition. I was skilled at warping the message of Biblical and literary tradition into that mold. I was the successful co-founder of The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion There was no miracle in the Bible that I could not pretty thoroughly explain away according to convictions stemming from Isaac Newton, the Enlightenment, and form criticism. . . . I had cheerfully dismissed the contention of Aldous Huxley. . . that religious experience could be triggered by mescaline as 'pseudo-ecstasy' and 'an escape from the real problems of life'" (Clark, 1979).

With characteristic humility, Walter says that he was slow in maturing and was something of a late bloomer. He holds that this is probably why he found his life "beginning" at sixty. What happened with Walter when he was sixty--and the years since then--are probably well-known to members of this Academy. In his sixtieth year, Walter had his first encounter with a psychedelic drug under the direction of Timothy Leary. Walter was on sabbatical leave from Hartford, and was filling a visiting professorship at Andover Newton Theological School in Boston. Some of the circumstances surrounding this experience might not be so well-known, and Walter has kindly given me permission to share them with you.

He was seeing a therapist for help in controlling a resentment that was consuming much of his energy and which even woke him up during the night, knotted with anger, and fantasizing many forms of revenge. The situation over which Walter was upset was a real enough instance of a gross injustice to a colleague by others, but Walter's inability to get it off his mind was draining his vitality and destroying his peace.

Although he did not consciously deal with it during this first LSD encounter, Walter realized the next day that he had somehow been cured of this preoccupation. When his therapist was unimpressed by his account of this experience, Walter dismissed him and has never again been bothered by the problem. While still recognizing the injustice and inappropriateness of what happened, his animosity had been wiped away.

This event heralded the beginning of the latest phase of Walter's life in which much of his scholarly and personal energies have been invested in studying the religious significance of psychedelic drugs. During this period he has written his third book. *Chemical Ecstasy*, published in 1969, and has been the sole president of this Academy since it began in his hands eight years ago.

Although his first LSD experience was for personal healing, since then Walter's continued interest and experimentation has been to understand better the effects of the drugs. However, he admits to considerable personal benefits from the experiences--most dramatically his loss of a fear of death of which he had not previously been conscious. The experiences resulting in this involved some of the most terror-ridden of psychedelic experience, but have left Walter with an added energy, zest for life, and appetite for food which are striking enough that he continues to marvel at them.

All of Walter's approximately fifteen ingestions of psychedelics have had religious aspects. He has written a considerable number of papers about them, so accounts of these experiences are available. Walter's open-mindedness that allowed him to change his stance on such drugs is all the more inspiring when we recall that he avoids use of such social drugs as alcohol and nicotine. He believes the drugs have taught him at least as much about psychology of religion as all of his reading, research, and study--though not necessarily more. They gave first-hand contact with much of what he had previously only studied from other people's accounts.

Although his current research interests are somewhat frustrated by legal constraints, Walter does what he can to keep alive thinking and new ideas on the subject. For the past three years, I have asked him to share his knowledge in this area by taking part in programs I have organized for The American Psychological Association. He has always graciously agreed to do so, and has had ready for me on time stimulating papers. At the same time, he has been regularly presenting papers at other professional meetings also. He keeps quite a pace for a 77 year-old youngster.

Now, I want to share with you some more personal accounts of my dealings with Walter. My first encounter with him was not a direct one, but came through his Psychology of Religion book. I had begun study at the University of Minnesota for the express purpose of studying religion from a psychological perspective. Although I did not know it at the time, my experiences paralleled Walter's in some interesting ways. I, too, had great difficulty convincing the University of Minnesota--the dustbowl of Midwest empiricism and a growing haven for behavioristic psychology--that religion was a suitable topic for a doctoral dissertation. That bastion finally secured, I next also wanted to teach psychology of religion. I argued that teaching it in the university's evening school would both enhance my own education and provide students an opportunity for a different type of psychology course. I was discouraged from trying to get approval, but got it with surprising ease. I was later told that the department chair was tremendously harried with many problems the day I had my appointment with him, and would probably have signed anything just to get rid of me quickly. My quest for a suitable textbook led me to decide on Walter's. Of those available, only his seemed free of the strong proselytizing biases to which authors of such works are prone.

When I attended the national convention of The Association for Humanistic Psychology in the late summer of 1975, I was astonished to realize that the white-haired man shortly ahead of me in the breakfast line was Walter Clark. He appeared to be alone, as was I, so I boldly went to where he was sitting, introduced myself, and invited myself to sit down. Walter was wearing Bermuda shorts and a rather wild sports shirt--all of which were jarring to the very scholarly image I had created of him. When he started to talk, I was even more jarred. He was discussing, as genuine mystical experience, what I had discounted--as he once did--as escapism. I was dismayed by his views on psychedelic drugs, although charmed by his openness, friendliness, and general personal appeal. I parted from him, however, somewhat disappointed since an "idol" I had created had shown what appeared to me to be very unacceptable clay feet.

Several weeks later I again saw Walter at The American Psychological Association meeting. Confidently I approached him, for I surely wanted to continue contact with the "great man" in the field of psychology of religion, even though somewhat disappointed in him. To my dismay, he did not remember me. As I tried to recreate our initial conversation, he became even more dismayed than I. Although there was little reason why he should remember a new scholar--whose name had never yet appeared in print or on a program, and with whom he had spoken only a few short minutes--he was deeply apologetic and promised that he would never again forget me. When we saw each other again in several months at The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, he was true to his word, although I approached him hesitantly, prepared this time to start from

the beginning again. It was here when I first offered him a glass of wine punch, to receive his reply, "Thank you, but I never touch anything stronger than LSD." When I have again absent-mindedly offered him alcohol, I receive the same gracious and humorous reply.

As I continued to see Walter at meetings, my respect for his honesty, humility, and friendliness grew. Slowly, in the opportunities available to us for personal conversation, I grew to know and love him. I have remarked to friends and colleagues: "What a pity he is not single and thirty years younger--I would really go after him!" Slowly, I found Walter's "youthful" attitudes cracking some of my resistances to new opinions about religious mysticism, and I found myself less sure that analogies I had drawn between drugs, rape, and suicide were valid. Finally, I admitted to him that I might even consider trying psychedelics myself. Walter patiently listened to my ambivalences, respected my hesitations, and encouraged me to think through my doubts. When I was finally ready--though still not without some reservation--Walter was there to support me in this decision and applaud me as courageous for it.

Walter had previously told me that he had occasionally conducted music and meditation seminars for personal growth and self-exploration. In them he used some rituals and readings from mystics, with the main focus on intense, blind-folded absorption in experiencing music. Early in the seminar there is a period of isolated and private meditation for each participant during which some participants who had brought psychedelics with them apparently ingested them. I also knew that when this appears to have occurred, Walter has supported the participants in working through their experiences. I decided to try this myself, and asked Walter to let me know when he would be doing another meditation seminar. For no fee at all--simply payment of his travel expenses--Walter and Ruth spent about twenty hours with the meditation participants, and another six hours traveling to get to them. Such generosity with his time is another appealing characteristic of Walter's.

In a letter to me about this presentation, Walter thanked me for being willing to help celebrate "my contributions and strengths in this public way at the same time that you minimize my darker side--though I guess I have not supplied you with much of that!" True, Walter has not supplied me with much of that, although there has been ample opportunity for him to do so over the past five years. I get faint indications that he can be capable of irritability and perhaps at times a bit tight with the purse. I also know from first-hand experience that he does not have a perfect memory. I am sure that some who do not want to hear what he has to say might find his enthusiasm trying or threatening. Yes, human limitations and weaknesses he has--and he acknowledges.

Yet in measures exceeding what I encounter in most people, I have seen in Walter humility, honesty, integrity, open-mindedness, intellectual curiosity, compassion, warmth, friendliness, and solid scholarship. These qualities endear him to me. He has been at different times and in different ways for me: idol, hero, saint, father, model, colleague, teacher, guru, and friend. I invite you to join with me in honoring a scholar and a beautiful person: Walter Houston Clark.

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Response by Walter Houston Clark

I want to thank you all for this occasion and particularly Mary Jo for her comments on my somewhat checkered career. I am reminded of a story from either Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn. At any rate you remember that the boys went off on a trip, and everybody in the town gave them up for lost. So there was a memorial service for them in the town church. About this time the boys reappeared but said nothing to anybody who had anything to do with the funeral. They sneaked into the gallery up above the congregation and listened to their own funeral orations which were quite different from the way people commented on them every day. So this has been, Mary Jo, somewhat like the experience of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, with one addition. This has been a great deal like my obituary but with the difference that I'm given a chance to comment on my own quasi-funeral oration. I am not going to refute point by point all these nice things that you have said about me, partly because I don't want to disillusion myself. As far as being a saint, it's quite clear that you haven't consulted intimately my partner of fifty years who could certainly have cleared up that error. But I'm going to have a chance to have a lot more fun before they put me in the ground if I don't feel that I have to live up to that aspect of your commentary on me. Maybe I'm not expected to say anything that isn't humorous in this, but I never can resist talking about the psychedelic drugs. As you have said, I find them fascinating and the research that I have done with them has taught me a great deal about psychology at first hand. It occurred to me when Ken was talking about the reasons for the interest in near-death experiences that maybe most cogent of all may be the breakthrough into that aspect of human nature that has occurred through psychedelic drugs. In my questionnaire study, (remember last night I spoke of the hundred people that took the questionnaire) one of the things that came up is that many of these respondents to the questionnaire reported death experiences, facing death as I did myself, as well as the happy experience of rebirth. Then I came across a study recently of

the Hari Krishna movement by a man by the name of Johnson in a sociological magazine where he reports that he has discovered that of the Hari Krishna people 95% had had their first religious experience through the psychedelic drugs. Then they joined the Hari Krishna movement and found that one of the things that's absolutely forbidden by the authorities in that movement, who are very authoritative, is that they are completely forbidden to use any drugs. But I think that a very important factor in this whole opening up of interest in the field of religion, not just the near-death experiences, but other experiences, is the opening that has happened in the 1960's with so many of the young people, many of them not very well advised who have opened this part of their personality. I have spoken long enough. Let me say once again thank you all for the honor that you have paid me on this occasion and thank you Mary Jo for being the chief agent in this happy experience for me and for Ruth.

PSYCHEDELIC DRUGS AND THE MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE:

A CASE STUDY

By JoAnn Marie Beeson

Abstract: The author recounts and draws some conclusions from her personal experience with LSD therapy.

Transformation through a mystical experience has been recorded by the mystics down through the ages. Mystical consciousness in various religious systems has been methodically cultivated. In India, Yoga (union of the individual with the divine) has been the path to mystical insight. Exercise, diet, postures, breathing, intellectual concentration and moral disciplines have been practiced on this path. The disciple, who has by these practices sufficiently overcome the obstructions of his lower nature enters into the condition known as samadhi, and becomes aware of facts which no instinct or reason can ever know. He learns

"That the mind itself has a higher state of existence, beyond reason, a superconscious state, and that when the mind gets to that higher state, then this knowledge and reasoning comes. All the different steps in yoga are intended to bring us scientifically to the superconscious state of samadhi...Just as unconscious work is beneath consciousness, so there is another work which is above consciousness, and which, also, is not accompanied with the feeling of egoism...There is no feeling of egoism...There is no feeling of I, and yet the mind works, desireless, free from restlessness, objectless, bodiless. Then the TRUTH shines in its full effulgence, and we know ourselves (for samadhi lies potential in us all) for what we truly are: free, immortal, omnipotent, loosed from the finite and its contrasts of good and evil altogether, and identical with the Atman or Universal Soul."

The Buddhist also uses the term samadhi; but dhyana is the special word for higher states of contemplation. Four stages are recognized in this higher state. Stage one comes through concentration of the mind upon one point. It excludes desire, but not discernment or judgement: it is still intellectual. Stage two, the intellectual functions drop off and the satisfied sense of unity remains. Stage three, the satisfaction departs, and indifference begins, along with memory and self-consciousness. Stage four, the indifference, memory, and self-consciousness are perfected. Higher stages include a region where nothing

exists; a region where there are no ideas or absence of ideas, and finally a region where both idea and perception cease. This region is the closest to Nirvana that the life experience offers.

In the Christian tradition there have always been mystics. The basis of the system is "orison" or meditation, the methodical elevation of the soul towards God. Zen Buddhism is inspired by the "Supreme Perfect Enlightenment" that came to Gautama the Buddha as he meditated. Deep contemplation leads to the mystical experience. The koan is used to transcend logic and achieve enlightenment. The solution of a particular koan may require several years of intense meditative effort. Once satori has been attained and the koan solved, the student finds that he can more rapidly solve others. The chief characteristics include irrationality, intuitive insight, authoritativeness, affirmation, sense of beyond, impersonal tone, feeling of exaltation and momentariness.

Religious traditions provide various paths to enlightenment. There is a long and continuing history of religious use of plants which contain psychedelic substances. Certain plants were injected by a priest, shaman, or witch doctor to induce a trance for revelatory purposes; sometimes plants were taken by groups of people who participated in sacred ceremonies. The dried heads of the peyote cactus whose chief active ingredient is mescaline, were used by the Aztecs at least 300 B.C. The god Soma was one of the most important ancient deities of India. Many hymns of the Vedas were dedicated to Soma. The effects of Soma are vividly described in terms of monistic self-glorification: "I have drunk soma, I have become immortal."

The Research. Mystical experience or mystical consciousness needs a definition. William Richards and Walter Pahnke have defined the term as a form of human consciousness the nature of which when described retrospectively may include:

1. Unity which refers to the transcendence of the subject/object dichotomy of preception during mystical consciousness. Instead of standing as a subject in polar relation either to objects in the external world or to specific thoughts, symbols, or visionary images within one's own mind, the experiencer seems to merge into a unity that transcends all empirical distinctions. Although such unity entails the transient "death" or "transcendence" of the empirical-ego (i.e., the personality or usual sense of self) followed by its "rebirth," consciousness paradoxically remains in that state of mind that follows "ego-death" and precedes "ego-rebirth."
2. Transcendence of Time and Space which reflects the description of mystical consciousness as transcending usual three-dimensional environmental perception and also somehow being outside of the entire historical drama, including past, present, and future. This state of transcendence sometimes is called "eternity" or "infinity."

3. Objectivity and Reality, perhaps the most perplexing to the person unfamiliar with this literature, denotes that aspect of mystical consciousness that William James named "the noëtic quality," writing "although so similar to states of feeling, mystical states seem to those who experience them to be also states of knowledge. They are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect." Following such experience subjects often claim to have recognized intuitively a more fundamental form of reality than the phenomena of everyday consciousness. Often the experienter reports a compelling certitude about the validity of the insights encountered and tends to view the altered state as intrinsically self-validating.
4. Deep-felt Postive Mood which reflects the elements of love, pureness, and peace, and occasionally joy that are reported inherent in the mystical consciousness. Ultimately there is no ground for anxiety.
5. Sense of sacredness is the aspect of mystical consciousness reflected in the term mysterium tremendum Rudolf Otto introduced to indicate the elements of awe, majesty, and energy. Irrespective of the religious or secular enculturation of the experienter, mystical consciousness often evokes powerful feelings of humility and reverence, sometimes described as those of a creature confronting its creator or of the finite encountering the infinite.
6. Ineffability and Paradoxicality - the alleged dilemma of the rational mind when in striving to express significant aspects of mystical consciousness, it often finds Aristotelian logic inadequate and finds itself formulating paradoxical assertions not unlike the koans of Zen Buddhism. A void was experienced that contained all reality.

Mystical consciousness and the unitive state is a state in which there is no observing subject and thus no objects of observation such as visionary forms or images. An archetypal experience may occur. In this state of mind, the ego encounters and sometimes approaches and identifies itself with, one or more visionary figures." Among the archetypes that have been reported and described by subjects participating in psychedelic drug-assisted therapy are the Wise Old Man (sometimes interpreted as the father aspect of the Christian trinity in anthropomorphic guise; the Christ, either as child, or adult; the Great Mother; and the Buddha or Bodhisattva. Not uncommonly the visionary encounter with an archetype is described in terms of a sequence of images that depict classical mythological themes."

Pahnke describes five kinds of potential psychedelic experiences that are generally accepted.

- A. Psychotic psychedelic experience, characterized by the intense, negative experience of fear to the point of panic, paranoid delusions of suspicion or grandeur, toxic confusion, impairment of abstract reasoning, remorse, depression, isolation, and/or somatic discomfort. All of these can be very powerful in magnitude.
- B. Psychodynamic psychedelic experience, dramatic emergence into consciousness of material that had previously been unconscious or preconscious. Abreaction and catharsis are elements of what is subjectively experienced as an actual reliving of incidents from the past or a symbolic portrayal of important conflicts.
- C. Cognitive psychedelic experience, characterized by astonishing lucid thought. Problems seen from a novel perspective and the inner relationships of many levels or dimensions can be seen all at once. The creative experience may have something in common with this type of psychedelic experience.
- D. Aesthetic psychedelic experience, characterized by a change and intensification of all sensory modalities. Fascinating changes in sensations and perceptions can occur: synesthesia in which sounds can be "seen," objects such as flowers or stones that appear to pulsate and become "alive," ordinary things that seem imbued with great beauty, music that takes on an incredible emotional power, and visions of beautiful colors, intricate geometric patterns architectural forms, landscapes, almost anything imaginable.
- E. Psychedelic peak, cosmic, transcendental or mystical experience-characterized by the previously described qualities.

In 1963, research was started at Spring Grove State Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland and was continued at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center until June 1977. The research was to investigate the usefulness of psychedelic-peak experience psychotherapy with alcoholic, neurotic, and narcotic addict patients and patients who were dying of cancer.

In August of 1976 I was hospitalized at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore with a diagnosis of recurrent Hodgkins Disease. The initial diagnosis had been made in August of 1969. A very good friend suggested that I contact Dr. William Richards at the Research Center. She was familiar with his work with persons who were being treated for cancer. I followed her suggestion. Dr. Richards agreed to see me the following day after I contacted him and from that started one of the most enriching journeys of my life.

Persons accepted into the program were screened. The following criteria were used: 1) presence of psychological distress, defined as depression, anxiety, and/or psychological isolation; 2) estimated prognosis of at least three months of life; 3) absence of brain metastases or organic brain disease; 4) absence of recent history

of chronic psychosis.

The psychotherapeutic process may be described in three phases.

Phase I, lasting typically between two and three weeks, focused on the establishment of rapport and exploration of the current conflicts of the patient. When appropriate, the patient was supported in coming to terms with issues of diagnosis and prognosis, in confronting and attempting to resolve interpersonal difficulties in the family, and in further resolving grief associated with the loss of important persons earlier in life. Not uncommonly, existential issues regarding the search for meaning, the struggle with despair, religious queries and the confrontation with one's own death became progressively prominent as the therapeutic relationship developed. In preparation for the psychedelic session the patient was introduced to the technique of Guided Affective Imagery and was supported in learning to approach, explore and accept his or her own symbolic and affective process. The range of altered states of consciousness known to occur during the period of drug-action including transcendent psychosomatic manifestation was described to the patient. On the day prior to administration, the therapist usually met with the patient's family as a group to explain the rationale of the experimental procedure and to provide the opportunity for family therapy.

Phase II.- Therapy on the day of drug administration, including period of drug action, lasted between 4 and 10½ hours with a mean distribution of 6 ¾ hours. Dosage was determined by judgment of the therapist, taking into account the body weight and the psychological resistance. The response of the patient to techniques of Guided Affective Imagery was employed by the therapist in making his assessment of the intensity of the resistance. During most of the period of drug action, a sleep shade was employed to minimize environmental stimuli and assist the patient in focusing on internal processes. Stereophonic music, generally symphonic or choral, also was used to provide a structure of non-verbal support and to help channel affective expression. The therapist and a specially trained nurse remained in constant attendance and provided interpersonal support and guidance when indicated. As the drug effects abated, verbal interaction between therapist and patient increased. Following termination of drug effects, the patient was joined by selected family members or significant others.

Phase III. began on the day immediately following the drug assisted therapy session and focused on the process of integrating new insights into the fabric of everyday existence. The mean amount of time devoted to this endeavor was $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours during the week following drug administration and an additional 2 hours spread over the next three weeks.

Psychedelic Session 10/13/76. Before trying to express on paper what I experienced on Wednesday I want to say that whatever I write cannot convey the feeling and knowing quality or the beauty. I know this because as I try to translate the experience into words it is like a surface description with much more left unspoken or written. Some phrases have meaning: communion with the gods; wholeness; together; union; a paradox of no separateness of self but in a sense an awareness of self; nothing to fear or to be sad about; to see God, one must go alone; bathed in love, peacefulness, joy--filled.

The journey started with the viewing of photographs in "The Family of Man" and meditating on a beautiful cream-color rose that was delicately touched with pink. My stomach felt "queezey." But I continued to look at the rose, and it began to breathe. My head felt "woozy" and "light." As I continued to watch the rose it seemed to be all that existed and the inner petals that formed the center of the bud began to pour forth from the rose: exquisitely beautiful. Words are becoming inadequate. At this point, the eye shades and earphones were put on and I reclined on the couch. The first thing that I noticed was the sound: clearness, brightness, with a solidness of form that could be touched; colors, vibrant and alive, were visible. I was moving down, in, through with a sensation of soaring-through layers of something like symbols, objects; it was as if thoughts would go by in solid form. At this time I remember "I'm getting confused" and the words "trust, let go, be open-to dive in" when this happened. There were "things" to see all around: a production of sight, sound continued. With so much going on the confusion came again: forms, objects, sounds, colors all went by quickly--trust and dive in-- I seemed to soar through layers. Then concern about breathing. I didn't think that I was breathing properly and a dialogue in me went on about this and dying, remembering words that you won't really die; but feeling my breath (breath of life) was stopping--trusting and letting go so as not to get hung up here. This is where I asked about breathing and there was a feeling of comfort and reassurance. The soaring seemed to stop; during this period there were strong emotional responses--very intense and real feelings connected with visual experience--smiles at sight that were pleasantly beautiful; deep pain and sorrow that caused tears; a feeling of wonder--these changed quickly--all very real but not held on-- passed through to the next.

There seemed to be a question of where was I going and the immediate answer: "to see God." Then I moved into a very lush green scene with lush green plants and trees, a pool- in this

space I was with my lover and it was a beautiful experience of flowing, blending, moving, touching, a merging of being--a oneness with him-- a very sexual experience. This lasted for a period of time--not the feeling of passing through a level but a lingering and experiencing. Then the question, "where am I going?" and there seemed to be a singing chant "I'm going to see God". The chant was repeated and there was dancing. The response came that if you are going to see God you have to go alone. There was a physical sensation in my body in the area of my womb--extremely warm and maybe an opening and expanding feeling. I felt that somehow I dove into this through the wonderful experience with my lover. There seemed to be an entering into the womb through this experience. This resulted in a feeling like being trapped in a bag (womb) having to struggle and violently kick free from this in order to go to see God alone. There was a wanting to stay in the lush green place and a pulling to go to see God; but there was also a longing to be with my lover. As I struggled and broke out there was a floating away from my lover into this other space where I was told that I could see God but not touch (different from feel).

A sensation of moving toward this most wonderful Being and a feeling of peeling off of whatever I am is happening. There is no me and yet I am aware as layers seem to drop I become one with the most wonderful joy, peace, love. It was like standing before God: total knowing, merging, accepting, part of it so small and so great (tears of the holiness of the experience are in my eyes now as I try to express this). The greeting was magnificent, in the feeling and the expression that we have been waiting for you; we have things to show you. Yet I was not me as I am today. There seemed to be beings waiting, opening their chamber. And just as the "peeling off" experience involved different colors, the chambers opened and flowed like the petals of the rose pouring forth in color, sounds, dancing. It seemed that I would pass through one chamber and be given to the gods at the next chamber, gloriously received. There was both a feeling of being part of the opening and flowing and being apart from it, like being shown "it" and being "it." Each seemed gently to close and present me to the next where gracious greetings took place and more splendor of opening. My thought was that I wanted to stay and not have this end. There was a response of more to show and then I must go. I felt this pass and got back into this glorious opening of high arches and altars. The only difference in the chambers seemed to be in the amount of opening and unfolding. Each chamber was opened by beautiful beings (no sexual identity) beautiful oneness, such grandeur and splendor my eyes had not experienced and yet it felt very familiar, at home. Writing is difficult to express because a multi-sensory experience expressed like this leaves out the other dimensions of what was happening. I was seeing, hearing, feeling in so many different ways.

Four or five beautiful chambers were experienced, and then I was told that was all today. The chambers seemed to gently close and I was pushed back. Somewhere I became aware that my hands were moving, and this somehow seemed to be connected to the unfolding and opening of the chambers. It was not I who I think

I know as I who was moving. It was like some beautiful "experience" happening that I was not. I've not words to describe what this was like. There was a sense of having received a beautiful gift, a moving perhaps in response- a holiness-sacred.

As I awoke I moved into a heaviness, crude, strangeness of matter that was the room where the journey started which in a sense seemed unreal. I felt there was nothing to fear or to be sad about. I felt ageless and that all we can do is LOVE.

Conclusions. "By their fruits you shall know them." I think this answers the question as to whether the psychedelic altered state of consciousness has a transforming effect. I personally truly believe that it does, if the experience is integrated. If not, it remains as just another experience. Whatever the psychedelic experience, I believe that the "internal beingness" knows where the individual needs to go and what needs to be experienced. This process is a gift that guides the individual to self-actualization, spiritual growth and maturation. It increases the awareness of the inner dimensions of the self and thereby enables one to experience life more fully and to better function in daily existence.

I feel that terminally ill persons should be given the option of using psychedelic drugs with an experienced guide. It can be very helpful in the dying process. The experiencing of ego death-trusting and letting go- provides a preparation for transition known as death: the ultimate letting go of things, persons, situations, events of the future. One can find that the universe is friendly and safe, a lesson that can be learned in an altered state of consciousness that has enlarged and expanded the views of reality of the individual.

The psychedelic experience can provide new insight and approaches to deity or perhaps just new personal confirmation to old universal truths. If we consider the psychedelic experience along side of the traditional religious mystical experience there are similarities. And if we recognize that the mystical religious experience is transforming then we may conclude that the psychedelic experience of mystical nature can be transforming.

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(It was not possible to recover the documentation for the footnotes in this essay. The author's intent is, however, clear without them. Ed.)

MYSTICAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE STATES INDUCED BY THE MIND

By John White

Abstract. The author explores the meanings, promise, but also the dangers of mysticism. Differentiating between saints and mystics, he draws attention to the importance of the experience of both for research into the nature of consciousness and the emergence of a deepened commitment to the values of service and love. He emphasizes the need for a holistic development of the mystic which includes a desire for loving service.

At the end of the Introduction to my book The Highest State of Consciousness, I make this statement: "I am the universe; I am Universal Mind." A few years after the book was published, a teacher of Vedanta, Swami Chinmayananda, and I were discussing that statement. He said to me, "No, John, the highest state of consciousness is not Universal Mind. It is the source of Universal Mind.

I appreciated his comment. I thought it gave further reinforcement to the explorations in consciousness which I've been making. It was another way of saying that God, the source of the highest state of consciousness, is beyond anything describable by human beings. We can experience God, but we cannot equal God. Even the most elevated people have found that there are states of being beyond them, that there are new experiences to be had in those states, and that enlightenment is an endless process. The growth of the soul never stops until it reaches universal proportions.

But what happens then? If Chinmayananda is right, then even the evolution of consciousness to universal dimensions--to a universe conscious of itself as a unified, living entity--is not the end. Beyond that, what can we say? We can make all sorts of intriguing cosmological speculation, but for most people this is confusing, even distracting and detrimental to their own main work on themselves in becoming grounded and functional on the earth. That is the attitude we find emphasized in Buddhism: don't talk--experience! If you were to ask a Zen master to describe the highest state of consciousness, he might stoop down and hand you a rock or something on that order, something equally startling. Startling, I might add, in order to help you burst through your ordinary state of awareness which is so thing-oriented and language-bound. Or he might puzzle you with a koan which goes like this: "Before enlightenment, I chopped wood and carried water. After enlightenment, I chopped wood and carried water."

What is the spiritual seeker and the consciousness researcher to understand by such a puzzling remark? I suggest the answer is this: reality is reality.. It is unchanging, but your perception

of reality changes. The only difference before and after enlightenment is that you perceive it differently and therefore relate to existence in a new and different way. Your sense of identity changes. You experience the cosmos as unified and intimately one with your own being, rather than experiencing it as a separate, isolated ego-bound individual. You experience directly the meaning of the statement, "I am the universe; I am Universal Mind."

But is it that simple? For most people, no. There are periods of intense struggle and doubt, of partial breakthrough, of chaotic upheavals in the mind, moments of insight, moments of confusion and despair, moments of exhaustion and utter apathy. What can we say about this process of cleansing the doors of perception, of finding our true self?

Again there is a Zen koan appropriate here. It goes like this: "Before I came to Zen, mountains were only mountains, rivers only rivers, trees only trees. After I got into Zen, mountains were no longer mountains, rivers no longer rivers, trees no longer trees. But when enlightenment happened, mountains were again only mountains, rivers again only rivers, trees again only trees." Here we can see essentially the same perspective as in the other koan, but there is the additional element here--the suggestion of an intermediate stage of growth in the process of enlightenment. And if we follow this notion of stages of growth, we find that there are traditions, including Zen, which have very soundly mapped out major landmarks on the path of enlightenment.

I think that is a clear description of the higher stages of enlightenment. It shows why I say in my Book, Everything You Want to Know about TM, that one white light experience does not a full-fledged mystic make, nor a saint. Flashes of cosmic consciousness are radical departures from our ordinary mind state. But they are only the beginning of a lifelong journey. The exploration of higher consciousness never ceases, our sages and saviors tell us, and enlightenment is an endless process. There are quantum leaps in awareness that mark certain stages of growth on the spiritual path. But the path that leads to God who is our home wanders all over the universe, and you can start on it anywhere.

I'd like to point out one other important fact for consciousness research. Our knowledge of higher consciousness comes from two classes of people--saints and mystics. This is one of the major points of confusion in the field of consciousness research. These two types of explorers in the spiritual stratosphere often aren't distinguished from one another, but mystics aren't necessarily saints, and vice versa. Mystics know primarily through the head, saints through the heart. I'm speaking figuratively, of course, about different modes of knowing, which are probably associated with different hemispheres of the brain. But the truly enlightened have always functioned as integrated people--saintly mystics, mystical saints--knowing fully through both modes.

Mystics bring us new knowledge of higher consciousness; saints demonstrate it in their lives. Mystics don't necessarily have the loving, selfless qualities of saints, but saints don't necessarily have the intellectual capacity or theoretical understanding needed to translate their awareness into terms that verbally communicate their experiences with depth and precision.

What mystics and saints do have in common is experience of the higher self, experience of a state in which the bonds of ego are dissolved or demolished or perceived as illusion. In this state the narrow view of self and world that ego creates is transcended for the moment and a larger, more fundamental sense of self-as-cosmos emerges into awareness, accompanied by an experience of peace, deep understanding of the nature of existence, and the perception of light. As Sai Baba succinctly puts it, "First you go toward the light, next you're in the light, then you are the light."

Incidentally, there is an important difference between mystical and mystifying. The latter kind of people--the mystifying ones--try to dazzle you with their verbal footwork. They cultivate an air of inscrutability and perhaps throw in some psychic phenomena to doubly impress you. But these are all ego games, and those who puzzle and those who amaze might be anything but enlightened. Jesus' test of higher consciousness still stands: by their fruits ye shall know them. All a person's claims and verbiage and spectacular displays don't mean much unless his manner of living gives evidence of an enlightened mind working for the liberation of mentally enslaved, suffering people. Purpose, meaning, direction in life, understanding--that's what people need and are searching for most of all, however ignorantly. And that's what the enlightened help others to find.

I've said that mystics aren't necessarily saints. Adolf Hitler is a striking example of a mystic who wasn't a saint. Several books have recently given us a radically revised and profoundly new portrait of Hitler. In The Occult Reich, The Occult and The Third Reich, and most important of all, The Spear of Destiny, clear, strong documentation of the occult foundations of the Nazi movement are presented. These books convincingly show that Hitler was a mystic of sorts whose inner circle of supporters were occultists practicing black magic with considerable knowledge about altered states of consciousness. Hitler's high native intelligence was raised to near-genius level through personal experience of transcendent consciousness, gained primarily through use of psychedelic drugs such as peyote and through initiation into occult practices for expanding awareness.

These mind-expanding experiences Hitler had as a young man gave him sporadic access to an illuminated state that later led him to say to one of his generals, "The purpose of human life is

to gain a mystic view of the universe." This is a surprising statement, far out of keeping with the stereotyped, one-dimensional image of Hitler that historians have thus far given us. It shows deep affinity with the thought of mystical evolutionists such as Teilhard de Chardin, Sri Aurobindo, Gopi Krishna, R.M. Bucke, Oliver Reiser.

Hitler's evolutionary notion of a superrace was formed not so much through reading philosophers such as Nietzsche as it was from direct experience of higher consciousness. He knew from his own life experience that the human being is really a human becoming--an organism in process of evolving to a higher state. But if Hitler had a significant degree of mystical understanding, he obviously failed to develop it in a balanced, integrated way, and thus failed to develop saintly traits. He failed to learn that high intellect and psychic ability are no substitute for refinement of character. Malignant influences distorted Hitler's inner vision and genius. Psychopathology developed, leading--unfortunately for humanity--to the holocaust of World War II.

Hitler had said, "The purpose of human life is to gain a mystic view of the universe." He was right as far as he went. But consciousness research--and I mean by that the experience of saints and mystics and the core teachings of all spiritual traditions--tells us that there is another part to the statement which Hitler was unaware of. The purpose of human life is not simply to gain a mystic view of the universe. It is to gain that view and then lovingly share it with others. Why? Well, enlightenment is freedom, liberation. But so long as one person is not free, no one is free. That is why the truly enlightened have always taken upon themselves a mission of service to the world, humbly, devotedly, without looking for recognition or reward, and last of all, power. They have done so because it is a characteristic inherent in the experience of the highest state of consciousness. That state involves a transformation of one's total being--both inner awareness and outer behavior. The ego is swept away. What is left has a human form to ordinary perception. It eats, sleeps, walks and functions like other human beings. As the koan says, it continues to chop wood and carry water. But the personal has changed into the transpersonal by the realization of one's total union with the infinite.

There is much talk nowadays about altered states of consciousness but not much about altered traits of consciousness. Yet without refinement of character and the development of saintly, even godlike behavior, all the alterations one may experience in consciousness--the lovely visions, the Brahmic splendor, the celestial music, the fascinating astral spaces--all the alterations are being wasted and thrown away. Consciousness is the meeting ground for inner and outer reality. If inner experience is not translated into outer form, the realization is incomplete and short-circuited.

So that brings us to the question: How can such translation be facilitated? There has been a veritable explosion of

psychotechniques and psychotechnologies lately, most of them claiming to induce mystical or transformative states. Hypnotic tape recordings, past life recall, alpha and theta brain-wave training, out-of-body sounds, various meditations, samadhi tanks--these are typical of the wares being offered by the enlightenment industry today. Do they have any value? If so, how much? What are they useful for?

My answer is: Yes, they do have value of a limited sort--value for the novice, value for the person just beginning to become aware of the higher ranges of being that are culturally denied and educationally excluded in our society. They are capable of delivering experiences that open the doors of perception a bit wider than normal. But the critical point to be understood about all truly mystical and transformative states is this: Their value is not in producing some new experience but in getting rid of the experiencer. That is, getting rid of the egocentric consciousness that experiences the situation from a self-centered point of view rather than a transpersonal point of view.

That transpersonal perspective must be no less than planetary. Psychotechnologies cannot guarantee this, however, nor, of course, can spiritual and sacred traditions. But the latter have a clear recognition of what constitutes genuine transformation. The enlightenment industry, for the most part, tends to emphasize flash and glitter--the froth rather than the depths of consciousness changing. As such, consciousness-altering devices and experiences tend to be used in the service of the ego rather than for dismantling it. They tend to reinforce what Zen calls Little Mind rather than structuring conditions for the emergence of Big Mind. This perspective on the development of higher consciousness needs to be corrected before anything truly valuable will emerge from the enlightenment industry.

This brings us to still another aspect of the highest state of consciousness--dealing with outer reality, with the world, with other people. The human race is coming quickly to one of history's Great Divides. It will be upon us by the end of this century. If we are to survive it, people must see that the situation is not simply political or sociological or cultural. It is biological. All life on Planet Earth is threatened with extinction from a number of sources. There's the threat of nuclear and chemical warfare. There's the threat from pollution of the air, the land and sea. Last and most uncertain is the possibility of earth changes and a pole shift destroying just about every living being on the planet.

All of these threats, except for the pole shift, are man-made--and even a pole shift may be caused to some degree by our own ignorant actions. So we can say that all of these threats to our well-being originate in the minds of people. Our behavior is a manifestation of our thinking and emotions, and in turn our thoughts and feelings are dependent upon our state of consciousness. We recognize the threat to life that these forms of behavior contain, yet we stubbornly persist in our old ways,

our fatal ways. It's not that we lack the knowledge to avert disaster. We know quite well what is coming and what the consequences will be, but we stubbornly refuse to act on that knowledge. It's simply that the problem goes deeper than intellectual knowledge. Our present world situation, then, is one in which we exhibit irrational life-threatening behavior. That in turn is due to what we might call "a crisis of consciousness." If that is so, then the solution to our problems can be stated very simply: change consciousness. As *A Course in Miracles* puts it, all our problems are really one problem--the problem of our separation from God, from the divine realization that we are one with the universe. Throughout history there have been sages and saviors who have realized their true nature and who have worked selflessly to uplift humanity, to bring our awareness back to the source of our being. Yet as we look around us today and read the headlines, it looks as if things are getting worse, not better. I want to address that question now.

As I survey natural and cultural history, I see ever-more complex forms of life coming into being in order to express more fully the consciousness behind existence itself. The grand theme of history is the evolution of consciousness. Evolution is always at work. That means now, today, right here. And what I see today, in addition to the threats to life, are signs that the life force is mobilizing its resources to resist extinction here. The signs that point in this direction are many. Although the media tend to make them look like confusion and upheaval, I see them otherwise. The growing restlessness among people as they search for new answers and new understanding is basically taking the form of exploring their own consciousness--and that, to me, is a very healthy sign indeed. The increasing interests in psychic and spiritual development, as I see it, are indications of a deep impulse to health working beneath the obvious symptoms of sickness in the body of humanity. And these approaches are being taken by young and old alike in the matter of trying to expand their consciousness. They are signs of a great awakening going on around the globe. That great awakening is the way nature will resist man's irrational behavior. Nature will resist the extinction of life here by evolving lifeforms to replace *Homo sapiens*--lifeforms that know how to live in harmony with the planet and its creatures. They will know how to live this way because their consciousness will have changed. I call this survival evolution. And I see it happening most dramatically at the human level. Many of the events in the news today are, from my perspective, preliminary signs that a higher form of humanity is emerging, just as the Cro-Magnons superseded the Neanderthal race.

What is coming to pass today, what you read about in the news, is not a communications gap, not a generation gap. No, it's a species gap. A new species is emerging on the planet and asserting its right to life. This inevitably brings it in conflict with the dominant species. And that dominant species is a dying species. Archeologists tell us that during the age of dinosaurs, little tarsier-like creatures lived at the edge of clearings. They

stayed small and under cover because the great lumbering dinosaurs would easily crush them to death otherwise. So in order to survive, they remained small and on the fringe. Then, when the dinosaurs died off, these small creatures emerged from cover into the open and began to grow, to evolve into primates--in fact, into the first manlike creatures.

But evolution didn't end there. And so when life reached the level of human development, one of the earlier races, the Neanderthals, were surpassed by the Cro-Magnon race. The Cro-Magnon people spelled doom for the Neanderthals. Cro-Magnon was apparently a higher form of life. Their cranial capacity was clearly larger than the Neanderthals. Their physique was more massive and taller. They had superior tool-making ability, and they were the world's first artists, as their cave paintings show.

I see the world scene today in terms that parallel this. A new species is making its way onto the surface of the globe, and as such is facing a threat from the dominant species. The chaos and confusion and social unrest around us are signs of what I choose to call "moral evolution." Sri Aurobindo described it as a journey toward perfection; Teilhard de Chardin spoke of noogenesis and a movement toward the Omega point. Whatever the name, as human culture comes to the end of a growth cycle, there is a rising chorus of voices demanding political reform, educational reform, nutritional reform, judicial reform, economic reform, ecological reform, agricultural reform--social reformation in general. All this and the greatly accelerated interest and exploration in psychotechnologies and spiritual disciplines are, as I see it, manifestations of a higher form of life coming onto the planet.

Outwardly, of course, these mutant humans resemble the older form. The difference is inward, in their changed mentality, in their consciousness.

The result, as I said, is a species gap. The new breed is emerging from cover. The larger dimensions of this process are not recognized at present by most evolutionary forerunners, or else it's only dimly intuited by them. Nevertheless, higher intelligence is working through them, calling them to self-recognition of their role in advancing the fabric of life. There is a mighty leap forward in survivolution happening, and the result is a big sorting-out process among people. Amid the confusion and upheaval, they're trying to find out what species they belong to. Now, it can be terribly painful and anxiety-provoking to stand with one foot in the old world and one in the new. But the marvelous and hopeful thing is that nature, in its infinite wisdom, has given us the means to take conscious, voluntary control of our own evolution. Through self-directed growth we can, in a sense, become co-creators with the cosmos. We can systematically work on ourselves in a safe, reliable manner that can help us to make a quantum leap over the species gap. How? That's what meditation and other spiritual disciplines

are all about. The test of their value is whether they are in tune with the biological imperative to evolve, to advance the entire fabric of life in refinement and intensity of consciousness.

The perennial argument against utopia, against the development of the New Age, against the coming of the kingdom, has been human nature. We are forever flawed, the argument goes. But my reply is this: human nature is changing. There is an evolutionary advance taking place in the world today as a new and higher form of humanity takes control of the planet. "Control," of course, means living in respectful recognition of intimate interdependence. It means living harmoniously with the planet--and therefore surviving the coming holocausts while the older species dies out from a massive overdose of irrationalism. The new breed is psychologically adapted to the altered conditions nature is imposing as she restores the balance that Homo sapiens has ignored for so long.

The name I give to the evolving form of humanity is Homo noeticus. Noeticus is a term meaning the study of consciousness, and that activity is a primary characteristic of the new breed. Because of their deepened awareness and self-understanding, the traditionally-imposed forms, controls and institutions of society are barriers to their full development. Their changed psychology is based on expression of feeling, not suppression. Their motivation is cooperative and loving, not competitive and aggressive. Their sense of logic is multilevel/integrated/simultaneous, not linear/sequential/either-or. Their identity is sharing-collective, not isolated-individual. Their psychic abilities are used for benevolent and ethical purposes, not harmful and immoral ones. The conventional ways of society don't satisfy them. The search for new ways of living concerns them. I dare say that most of us here sense that we belong to this emerging, evolving species because it is in tune with the evolutionary purpose, which is to grow toward higher states of being and ultimately return to the godhead which evoked us in the first place.

Homo noeticus, I have said, is the name I give to the new form of humanity, to the offspring of man. There have been other names proposed, and certainly others before me have suggested the emergence of a higher humanity. For the majority of westerners, however, the most familiar term for this was given to it two millennia ago, and so I will use it as a point of instruction. When Jesus spoke of himself, why did he mostly use the term "Son of Man?" Others called him the Son of God, but Jesus referred to himself as the Son of Man, the offspring of humanity. Moreover, he told those around him that they would be higher than the angels and that those things which he did, they too would do, and greater. The reason for this is that Jesus was aware of himself as a finished specimen of the new humanity that is to come--the new humanity that is to inherit the earth, that is to establish the kingdom, the New Age. His mission and his teaching have at their heart the development of a new and higher state of consciousness on a species-wide basis. His unique place in history is based

upon his total realization of the divinity, the Ground of Being incarnated in him. Jesus was an historical person; but Christ, the Christos, is an eternal transpersonal condition of being to which we all must someday come.

Jesus did not say that the highest state of consciousness was his alone for all time. Nor did he call us to worship him. Rather, he called us to follow him, to follow in his steps, to learn from him, from his example. He called us all to share in a new condition, to be one in Christ, to be one in the Christ consciousness which alone can dispel the darkness of our lives and renew our very being. In short, Jesus aimed at duplicating himself by fostering the development of many Jesuses. Or as the Bible puts it, to make all one in Christ.

The kingdom is within us. Divinity is our birthright, our inheritance, nearer to us than hand and foot. But the eye will not see and the ear will not hear. Jesus called on people to awaken, to change their ways, to repent for the kingdom is at hand. But notice the word: repent. Over the centuries it has become sadly mistranslated and debased, so that today people understand it merely as feeling sorry for their sins. This is an unfortunate debasement of Jesus's teaching. In its original sense, though, as Jesus used it and as it comes to us in the Greek word metanoia, it means something far greater than merely feeling sorry for misbehavior. Metanoia has two etymological roots. Meta means to go beyond, to go higher than. And noia comes from nous, meaning mind. It is the same root from which Teilhard de Chardin developed his term, noosphere, and from which the word noetic comes. So the original meaning of metanoia is literally "going beyond or higher than the ordinary mental state." This is the heart of Jesus's life and teaching. Metanoia indicates a change of mind and heart--even more, a change of behavior based on fundamental insight into the cause and effect of one's previous actions. Metanoia in its best sense, then, means a conversion experience based on a new state of awareness, a new state of consciousness. That state of consciousness is what Jesus exhibited and taught--cosmic consciousness, the Christ consciousness, the peace that passeth understanding, the direct experience of divinity dwelling in us, now and forever, creating us, preserving us, urging us on to ever-higher states of being.

The institutional Christian churches tell us that Jesus was the only Son of God, that he incarnated as a human, that his mission was salvation from sin. But that is not the full story. The significance of incarnation and resurrection is not that Jesus was a human like us, but rather that we are gods like him, or at least have the potential to be.

Jesus showed us the way. He demonstrated in his life and explained in his teaching that we all have the potential--the God-given right--to enter the kingdom, to be healed of our sense of separation and alienation, to become whole and holy. We all have this potential, given not by "my" Father, but as the Lord's Prayer says, by our Father. He showed in his life, his death and his

resurrection that we are eternal celestial beings whose home is the universe. He showed that heaven is a present reality, not a future reward. He showed that the death of the body is not the destruction of our consciousness, that the Christ consciousness which embodied itself in the man Jesus transcends the known facts of physics and biology, and actually controls conventionally-understood physics and biology. He showed that the Christ consciousness was, is and ever shall be present among us, faithfully calling us to reunion, world without end, for it is the source of all creation.

The significance of Jesus is not as a vehicle for salvation, but as a model of perfection. This is why the proper attitude toward him is one of reverence, not worship. Jesus showed us the way to a higher state of being and called upon us to realize it, to make it real, actual. This is the true meaning of being born again--dying to the past and the old sense of self through a change of consciousness. In the course of this change, there are stages which can best be presented in a simple formula. We grow from orthonoia--that is, a common, everyday state of mind--to metanoia only by going through paranoia, which is the state in which mind is deranged and rearranged. But paranoia, seen from this perspective, is not necessarily breakdown. Rather, it is breakthrough. Not the final breakthrough, to be sure, but a necessary stage of development on the way to the Kingdom.

Jesus showed us the way to the Kingdom, but he will not--and indeed, cannot--magically take anyone there. That depends on your own effort. Grace is still the final factor in crossing the planes of consciousness. Nevertheless, the effort should be made, must be made. Like the climber who went up Mt. Everest simply because it was there, sooner or later every human being will feel a call from the cosmos to ascend to godhead. That is our historical love affair with the divine.

So long as people conceive of an unbridgable gulf between themselves and that which Jesus demonstrated, Christianity will remain a cult of personality. But when the human potential he demonstrated is understood to be within you, when the capacity to grow to godlike stature is directly experienced by you as the key to the kingdom, then Christianity will fulfill its purpose by encouraging people to evolve, to transform themselves, to rise to a higher state of being.

The Son of Man showed us the way to that higher state--the same way that other saviors of humanity have showed us at other times and other places. We have been guided by Buddha and Krishna and Lao Tsu and Mohammed, Zoroaster and Quetzcoatl, Moses and Guru Nanak. The human race has been guided by many other evolutionary forerunners who have given us the world's religions, sacred traditions and spiritual paths. The core truth of them all is the same: Thou shalt evolve to a higher state of being and return to the Godhead which is your very self, your condition prior to all names and forms.

We have the teachings and prophecies from these channels of truth. We have the technical instruction in their holy scriptures. We have information of the most advanced sort from many equally valuable sources, but we have not put it into practice.

This hardness of heart has brought us to what I see as the most critical juncture in our history. If Planet Earth should end up as just a blinding flash in the night sky, from the cosmic point of view it will be the loss of just one life-bearing planet circling a minor star in a middle-sized galaxy among the billions of galaxies--just an evolutionary experiment that failed. That terminal flash can happen, but it need not. The source of our being is calling to us through innumerable forms and channels--through nature and through enlightened teachers--calling us to awaken to our true identity and to carry that knowledge forward in the emergence of a higher form of life. Salvation, liberation, enlightenment is possible for us at every moment. This is what our spiritual teachers and sages and saints have told us throughout history, and the unanimity of their voices transcends any sect or religion or organization. Buddhism, for example, has no concept of sin and so Christians often feel it is antagonistic to their beliefs. But from the point of view of metanoia, Buddhism, and Christianity are reconciled because Buddhism, which does recognize that there is wrongdoing in the world, says that it arises in people because they have become separated from their True-self, their Buddha-mind--the higher mind which is known in enlightenment.

There are many paths up the mountain to God. There is the Christian path, the path of yoga, the Zen path and so forth. But when these paths get to the top of the mountain, they all come together. That is when the ego dies and one is fully reborn into the life divine--beyond narrow sectarianism, beyond intolerance of another's path and beyond attachment to the path that brought you up. At the top of the mountain, in the highest state of consciousness, you are free.

Where do you go from there? You may choose to remain on the mountain top, but remember what I said earlier: so long as one is not free, no one is free. That is why so many have chosen to go back down the mountain to help the progress of other travellers on the path. That is why Jesus died on the cross with forgiveness in his heart. That is why Buddha would not obtain final enlightenment until all sentient beings were ready first. Look around you.

John White is an author and editor of numerous books and is deeply involved in investigation of the nature of consciousness.

RESPONSE TO JOHN WHITE

By George Fisk

As I understand our particular contribution to this total program we are to discuss mystical and transformative states as induced by mind. Which is to say, we are not considering how such a state might be induced by hypnosis, drugs, near-death, or spiritual disciplines.

John White has pointed out that the highest state of consciousness is not Universal Mind, but the source of Universal Mind. That is, even though mystical consciousness transcends ordinary consciousness, still it is something less than ultimate. To try to put as tough scientific parameters on it as possible we would say that normal consciousness lies in the beta and high alpha ranges in the neighborhood of 12 to 30 cycles per second. Mystical consciousness seems to be most common when a person is in theta, 7-8 cycles per second. Having said this I quickly want to add that I personally feel it is too early in the studies relating EEG to mystical states to say that my assumption above is absolute fact. Mystical consciousness and theta brain waves seem to have much in common. This is a general truth. At the same time we confront the problem of psychics who are convinced that they are receiving material from higher planes while their brain waves are in a perfectly normal beta pattern. The quality of the material received does not seem discernably different whether the psychic is in beta or theta. Some people when in a "blissed-out" state exhibit a high-energy beta. Yet, being aware of these abnormalities, I still think it is a fair generalization to equate mystical consciousness with that state of mind which is just above sleep, delta, in the 7-8 cycles per second range.

I agree with the premises of the priest-paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin that what we see on the planet is not entropy but an ever rising state of consciousness. Rather than the degradation of matter and energy to an ultimate state of inert uniformity we can see a "radical energy" which has moved through the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human forms to ever higher consciousness. That the planet is at this time moving to an even higher consciousness in the "New Age," or "Aquarian Age," is a further fruition of that trend.

At the same time I think it would be a mistake to regard this change as all new. In the centuries prior to the common use of the printed word, in the pre-Gutenberg time, I believe that humanity in general lived in a wider span of brain consciousness. The use of the written and printed word on a wide scale while enormously enhancing the volume of thought for consideration at the same time caused a tragic narrowing of the doors of perception. How captured have we been? Today we do not appreciate a symphony concert unless we have carefully read

the foot-notes of the program telling us what we should appreciate. In the same way we do not know the art gallery until we have read the guide-book. With reading, which is mostly a beta-consciousness technique, we know about thousands of things...but we have apprehended in total experience only a few. Mysticism implies the use of a widened band of consciousness in apprehension of the world. In the pre-Gutenberg era humanity lived more openly with a wider span of consciousness. It would be naive to claim that those who have been opening their minds to higher consciousness in recent years are the first to do so. It would be more appropriate to say that we are just now recovering from five hundred years of a narrow style of perception in reading books. Still over the many centuries Teilhard's recognition is true... the earth shows a continual rise in consciousness culminating in man.

John White raises the question, can rising consciousness be equated with moral improvement? Few would question that one can be psychic without being a saint. While saints usually seem to have psychic abilities they generally tend to say that these are not important and down-play them. Obviously we are asking ourselves a key question, "Is higher consciousness simply a finer attunement of muscles, nerves, brain waves, mind which opens up such gifts as clairvoyance and prophecy, or is higher consciousness associated with morality, love, concern in the heart for the best for all people and things?" It is a tribute to our God within that few would opt for simply being more psychic. If there is to be a psychic growth of the mind which has nothing to do with the heart most of us would instinctively reject such growth. We would prefer a goal which sees a growing greatness of the heart along with the powers of the mind. At the same time none of us would equate stupidity with godliness. People who truly seek to live in love towards others cannot but grow in abilities. Those who love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength and their neighbors as themselves are on a better path than those who merely seek to develop a more sensitive mental awareness.

RESPONSE TO JOHN WHITE

By John Bisaha

There are five major areas of John White's paper which I will briefly address myself to in my time allowed:

- (1) the mystic who knows through the head, having knowledge of higher consciousness;
- (2) the saints who know through the heart and demonstrated knowledge of higher consciousness in their lives;
- (3) dealing with outer reality, with the world and with other people;
- (4) the great divide to which history is coming; and
- (5) the biological evolution of Homo Noeticus.

I agree with what John White says about homo noeticus. But I also think back to the late 60's and early 70's with the concerned generation of students who fought against prejudice, war and poverty. The folksongs and demonstrations of this era demonstrate what was happening. They strived for enlightenment, exploring with drugs and religions, making words like meditation and consciousness common well-known phrases.

It's 20 years later, and has the world changed? Recession, inflation, war, violence, prejudice still exist. Since these children were the result of the post-war baby boom, something should have been more visible. Why do you only see very few of the Homo Noeticus?

In reviewing John White's paper, an event that happened in my past came to my mind. A friend of mine found a baby hawk, the mother having been killed by my friend's father for killing his chickens. Feeling sorry for the bird, my friend took the bird and placed it in among the young chicks in the chicken coop. His father said that surely the bird would die. The bird survived, but a strange thing happened. It pecked the ground and walked and mimicked the chickens. It refused to fly, even though every opportunity was made for it to do so. In fact, it thought it was a chicken. It never achieved its full potential living with the chickens, but died in the chicken house. A quotation from Sai Baba is helpful here: "First you go toward the light, next you are in the light, then you are the light." I would like to adapt that to say "First you were the light. You forgot the light was burning; and some find a way to rekindle the flame."

All things are possible to a child, who when born is really the light. Miracles are everyday events, whether they be ones of discovery or creation. In being the light, the child cannot help but spread love to others around him. Various scientific tests of ESP show that telepathy, clairvoyance and psychokinesis are taken for granted by the child. But around five years old, the process we call socialization starts to extinguish the light so that "reality", whatever that might be, can dominate. The new species "Homo Noeticus" is here right now, but extinguished, lying dormant in many of us waiting to appear.

But the saint vs. the mystic can be seen also in another way. We have all heard of the concept of the left hemisphere of man's brain being the speech centered/logical side, while the right hemisphere is the creative/musical side. It seems to me that so many persons are centered in one side or the other. A "Liaison Brain" providing a unified whole is the perfection to strive for. With this unification we can flow back and forth experiencing the whole. Although society seems to keep us with our left brain dominating us with alienation and materialism. But without society we could not experience "Love" of the world and others. This the link that is necessary between the mystic and the saint. All merged together they become love of ourselves, others, and God.

Most parapsychological researchers think that the elements of PSI have been around since man began. In a way, we were "psychically" seeing where "sabretooth tigers were for self preservation as well as directly talking with God. But man somehow forgot these capabilities, depending more on his left brain" of rational logic so typical of western culture. So we see ourselves in our cars, our homes, and not in what we were in our ancestors or what we were capable of as children. Society seems to control us; we do not control it. But only with the love of the saint for the world and the knowledge of the mystic can we find an answer. God so loved the world that he sent his own son, thus reassuring us that we can make this world what we want. Man decides on the coming of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse or builds a Garden of Eden.

My research in precognitive remote perception has shown that the past, the present, and the future are all here now. The future operates on what I call "Predetermined-Free Will," although the future is predetermined by the events that led up to this point. We have the option to change those future events. Homo Noeticus is here, but society will soon let him emerge. The destruction John White speaks of can be diverted. All we have to do is get up and fly like a hawk and quit playing chicken.

DIALOGUE WITH AUDIENCE

Boyce Batey: It has been said that an altered state of consciousness is when you are kissing someone who has false teeth and the false teeth slip. That slipping feeling you find in your abdomen is the altered state of consciousness. But we are examining here today transformative states of consciousness. The story is told of the farmer working in his watermelon patch, coming upon a large glass jug. On the impulse of the moment he put a blossom of the watermelon in the jug. And then at the time of the harvest when he came upon it he found a stunted watermelon, the size of the jug. Shakespeare's Hamlet and I could be bounded by a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space. Our boundaries are not of the body but of the mind. Teilhard de Chardin said, "Our object as men is to act as though no limitations to our abilities exist. To be co-creators with God." Once I sat in Satsang with Yogi Bajan, the spiritual head of the Sikh Dharma Brotherhood, and we asked him questions. He responded but his answers did not mesh with the questions that we asked. I couldn't understand. I expressed my concern. In his response, I came to a quantum leap in my own understanding as to where he comes from in consciousness, where we all can come from in consciousness. His reply: you are asking me questions out of the private and social levels of consciousness. I am responding out of universal consciousness. And when he said that, it rang true. The limitations in our question as to what the answer might be dulls the mind as to what the answer can be. His answer drew us beyond the limitation of our own consciousness. Dr. Andrew Greeley did a study of those who have had mystical experiences and correlated that with the state of mental health, finding the highest possible correlation with

those who had had a mystical experience and the degree of their mental well-being. He concluded that the mystical state of consciousness is psychoneurophysiologically at all states of one's being an integrative, healthful and healing state of consciousness.

Edgar Wirt: I have a question for John White. Your description of the power of Christian orientation was excellent. But where does it leave us with respect to Christians who do not share your understanding of Jesus? We cut across different denominations, but not all denominations. Is there a new sect coming up?

John White: In a sense the situation is analagous to what prevailed when Christianity began. Jesus said I have come to fulfill the law and the prophets, and so in that sense he felt himself very much to be in the mainstream that is the quintessential fulfillment of the Judaic tradition. And yet we know what happened; another institution arose. So that I recognize that as the potential existing right now, if there is now wide spread acceptance and understanding and adoption of my perspective on Jesus. I don't have any definitive answer to make to you. It may be that another sect or many sects could arise. At the same time, I think that there is such anemia, if you will, prevailing in the institutional churches that they seem to be dying of their own internal inertia. From my perspective it means that the holy spirit is withdrawing, if you will, from the institutional forms, leaving fossil shells behind and inevitably new institutional forms for the expression of religious experience will arise. We can only hope that those who bring these new forms into being will not lose touch with the perception, the awareness of the Christos as readily or as rapidly as seems to have been the case in the Christian tradition itself. Beyond that I cannot prognosticate.

Edgar Wirt: One further point then. Will they expect further adherence of our point of view from the unchurched? Is it atheistic? Or is our Christology too much for them?

John White: The question is: Can we expect further adherence to the Christology that I proposed or will there be more falling away and greater splintering in Christianity? Among the unchurched what can we expect? It seems to me that there is a ladder of evolution on which we are all at one rung or another and we go up rung by rung. So I do not look for any overnight en masse transformation to take place. Nor do I look for any wide spread rapid conversion of Christendom--let alone Islam, the Buddhists and other religious traditions. Enlightenment is an endless process. As we go up one step of the ladder of evolution there are still more below us who must come up to the very step that we abandoned. So it will not be a rapid proliferation of acceptance. The probability as I see it is that in terms of the evolutionary perspective I offered, there may indeed be wide spread decimation among our institutions and life forms on the earth. But if that is the case, it's simply the way evolution works.

Nature doesn't make mistakes. Nature is always in balance and operating intelligently and harmoniously. So if we in a massive act of irrationalism depopulate the world to a great extent what that means in evolutionary terms is that we have simply cleared a niche, if you will, for the emergence of higher life forms.

John White: Someone has asked me to talk about the relationship between what Dr. Ring described this morning about near-death experiences and my own perspective. I see what's happening and what Ken Ring referred to as one of many elements operating in the world today as preparing the seedbed of a new age. That is, the near-death experience is being articulated and disseminated into the mainstream of society, and at that level of information we are preparing the minds of people for a transformation. It is information that can lead to transformation, and in that respect the use of broadcast media is serving a very useful purpose. Merely having this information out there, in a sense, is preparing for transformation.

Boyce Batey: I especially like the extrapolation that Ken Ring made at Harvard Divinity School on the implications of the near-death experience when he said that it could have for our culture as a whole the same implication it has for those individuals that experience it: i.e., when people become knowledgeable about the reality of it they too will become more loving, tolerant, understanding, and committed to selfless service for others.

Dick Batzler: In light of John's comments about Mr. Wirt's question, I think it is significant that we are meeting on a day in the life of the Christian church, the Day of Pentecost, which was really a very key event in the life of faith when the disciples, gathered in the upper room with a sense of wonderment in doubt and perhaps despair, were suddenly inspired with new power. A true metanoia for them. It empowered and enobled and began the institutional church and I can see a little pentecost happening here. I was looking for some tongues of fire on heads. I didn't see any, but I can see that what is happening here today can be a partial answer to your question and that no doors are closed, all possibilities are open. So I want to affirm that this is not a conference but a day of celebration in the Christian church where a lot of things can be happening.

MYSTICAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE STATES INDUCED BY SPIRITUAL
DISCIPLINES: THE TEACHING OF SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS

By Kevin Culligan

Abstract: The author explains the meaning St. John of the Cross gave to contemplation and to the "new person" which is the state of total transformation in God. This state is not necessarily associated with extraordinary psychic phenomena. He discusses the disciplines which are preparatory to the achievement of contemplation.

The subject of my talk -- Mystical and Transformative States Induced by Spiritual Disciplines -- is indeed vast. To serve as a guide in presenting such a broad and complex topic, I have chosen Saint John of the Cross, the sixteenth-century Spanish mystical writer. St. John, of course, is not the only authority on this subject, for he expresses but one mystical tradition in Christian history, a tradition variously called apophatic or the via negativa which emphasizes finding union with the Transcendent God through detachment from creatures, forgetting, and unknowing as contrasted with the kataphatic or via affirmativa mystical tradition expressed by a writer like Ignatius of Loyola which stresses finding union with the Immanence of God present in all things.¹ However, for those drawn to knowing God by unknowing, St. John's writings,² rich in both theological and psychological insight, have provided reliable guidance for four centuries. Even today, persons seeking guidance in the mystical life turn to Saint John's writing for enlightenment as may be seen in the sales figures on the Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications in Washington, D.C., which has sold over 45,000 copies of The Collected Works of Saint John of the Cross since 1973 and in our current year, 1980, average 550 sales a month. ~~For~~ our purposes this afternoon, then, I propose to share with you the following: 1) Saint John's understanding of "mystical and transformative states;" his understanding of the "spiritual disciplines" involved in arriving at such states;³ and several personal reflections on these topics.

MYSTICAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE STATES. Saint John of the Cross most often uses the word "mystical," not to describe a state of being, but to define a way of knowing, especially a way of knowing God.⁴ In contrast with scholastic theology which is knowledge of God derived through deductive reflection upon revealed truths, mystical theology is knowledge of God through personal experience, particularly the experience of love.⁵ Writing to Mother Ann of Jesus in the Prologue of The Spiritual Canticle, a treatise describing the nature of mystical understanding, John notes the loving and experiential character of mystical theology in contrast to scholastic theology:

Even though Your Reverence lacks training in scholastic theology by which the divine truths are understood, you are not wanting in mystical theology which is known through love and by which one not only knows but at the same time experiences.⁶

For Saint John, mystical theology--knowing God through personal experience--is synonymous with contemplation. In Book Two of The Dark Night, John writes:

...contemplation is the mystical theology which theologians call secret wisdom and which St. Thomas says is communicated and infused into the soul through love.⁷

John understands contemplation as the infusion of God into the soul which is experienced by the person as a general, indistinct loving knowledge--the loving Wisdom of God.⁸ The light arising from this loving knowledge of contemplation enables the person to make the long, arduous journey from total attachment to self to total attachment to God.⁹ According to Saint John, contemplation causes union of a person with God through love. As the light and heat of a fire gradually transform a log into the fire itself, so the loving knowledge received in contemplation gradually transforms the human person totally into the life of God.¹⁰ Referring to contemplation as a dark night, John sings of the transforming effects of contemplation in these famous lines:

O guiding night!
O night more lovely than the dawn!
O night that has united
The Lover with His beloved,
Transforming the beloved in her Lover.¹¹

If John does not speak of mystical states as such, the transformation of the human person in God as a state of being is a central concept in his writings, particularly in his two major treatises The Spiritual Canticle and The Living Flame of Love.¹² An effect of mystical theology or the loving knowledge received in contemplation,¹³ this state of transformation is identical in John's mind with the perfect union of the human person with God through love.¹⁴ In this state of divine union, the person is literally transformed in God. God and the human person are one because the will of the person and the will of God are one.¹⁵ The person lives fully in God and God lives fully in the person.¹⁶ The human person becomes God by participation although retaining his or her unique identity, as John explains in The Ascent of Mount Carmel:

When God grants this supernatural favor to the soul, so great a union is caused that all the things of both God and the soul become one in participant transformation, and the soul appears to be God more than a soul. Indeed, it is God by participation.

Yet truly, its being (even though transformed) is naturally as distinct from God's as it was before, just as the window, although illumined by the ray, has an existence distinct from the ray.¹⁷

The state of divine union has specific psychological effects for the human person, for in this state the human cognitive and conative faculties are transformed beyond their natural capacities into a divine manner of knowing and loving. Writing in *The Dark Night*, John describes the sentiments of one who has achieved this transcendence:

I departed from my low manner of understanding, and my feeble way of loving, and my poor and limited method of finding satisfaction in God. I did this unhindered by either the flesh or the devil.

This was great happiness and a sheer grace for me, for through the annihilation and calming of my faculties, passions, appetites, and affections, by which my experience and satisfaction in God was base, I went out from my human operation and way of acting to God's operation and way of acting. That is:

My intellect departed from itself, changing from human and natural to divine. For, united with God through this (contemplative) purgation, it no longer understands by means of its natural vigor and light, but by means of the divine wisdom to which it was united.

And my will departed from itself and became divine. United with the divine love, it no longer loves in a lowly manner, with its natural strength, but with the strength and purity of the Holy Spirit; and thus the will does not operate humanly in relation to God.

And the memory, too, was changed into presentiments of eternal glory.

And finally, all the strength and affections of the soul, by means of this (contemplative) night and purgation of the old man, are renewed with divine qualities and delights.¹⁸

Finally, in this state of union with God through love, the human person's daily actions are transformed, assuming a divine quality. John explains:

God now possesses the faculties as their complete lord, because of their transformation in Him. And consequently it is He Who divinely moves and commands them according to His spirit and will. As a result the operations are not different from those of God; but those the soul performs are of God and are divine operations. Since he who is

united with God is one spirit with Him, as Saint Paul says (1 Cor. 6:17), the operations of the soul united with God are of the divine spirit and are divine.

These souls, consequently, perform only fitting and reasonable works, and none that are not so. For God's spirit makes them know what must be known and ignore what must be ignored, remember what ought to be remembered--with or without forms--and forget what ought to be forgotten, and makes them love what they ought to love, and keeps them from loving what is not in God. Accordingly, all the first movements of these faculties are divine, for they are transformed into divine being.¹⁹

According to John, the union of the human person with God through love which transforms the person's entire life, psychological operations, and daily activities is the highest state attainable in human life, the state of perfection, the spiritual marriage between "the soul and Christ, its bridegroom."²⁰ This union, a prelude to eternal life, restores the human person to God's original plan and realizes the New Testament ideal of the "new" person.²¹ This state of the total transformation of the person in God is the goal to which St. John directs his readers in all his writings.²²

Before considering the spiritual disciplines involved in arriving at transformation, I want to underscore several points in John's understanding of this state of being. First, the state of transformation can never be considered apart from God, for transformation by its very nature implies the perfect union of a person with God and is itself God's gift to the person in the loving knowledge of contemplation.

Secondly, only a relatively few persons arrive at total transformation in God, and then only after a long spiritual journey through the various states of growth and crises of purification which prepare a person for perfect union with God in love.²³

Third, transformation in God represents the final stage of normal Christian development brought about by the power of God present in human life, a power leading Israel from the bondage of Egypt into the freedom of the Promised Land in the Old Testament, leading Jesus Christ through death to risen life in the New Testament, and leading the Christian from total attachment to self to total transformation in God through love. Thus, the state of transformation is not necessarily associated with extraordinary psychic phenomena; it may be present in very ordinary persons who manifest the experience of divine union simply through profound insight into the mysteries of God and self, abiding inner peace and joy, and an exterior life of consistent Christian virtue.²⁴

Finally, as a totally free gift of God to the person, transformation can never be achieved by human effort alone. For this reason, spiritual disciplines do not in themselves induce transformation, although they may dispose a person to receive the transforming loving knowledge of God in contemplation.²⁵ Let us now consider those spiritual disciplines which according to Saint John dispose a person for transformation in God.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES. For Saint John of the Cross, spiritual disciplines prepare the human person psychologically to receive the transforming loving knowledge of God in contemplation. We may divide these disciplines according to the areas of human life they dispose for this knowledge, namely the sensory self, the spiritual self, and the total self.

A. Discipline of the Sensory Self: Mortification of Desires. The five bodily senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch, together with the interior faculties of fantasy, imagination, and sensible memory, compose the sensory self. Through the sensory self, the entire person remains in continual contact with the surrounding physical world. Pervading the sensory self is desire, an affective tendency moving the sensory faculties to union with their material objects. For the entire person to be disposed for contemplation, the sensory self must be free of inordinate attachments to the natural objects of the sensory faculties. Discipline of the sensory self thus attempts to free the desires of the sensory faculties from inordinate attachment to their natural objects in order to be centered upon their Ultimate Object, God. These sensory desires are familiar to all of us as the incessant longing to be satisfied through material objects, a longing described by the mad psychiatrist-scientist hero in Walker Percy's novel, Love in the Ruins:

The first thing a man remembers is longing and the last thing he is conscious of before death is exactly the same longing. I have never seen a man die who did not die in longing. When I was ten years old I woke up one summer morning to a sensation of longing....

...My life is a longing, longings for women, for the Nobel Prize, for the hot bosky bite of bourbon whiskey, and other great heart-wrenching longings that have no name....

I can't hold still. Why? The longing is back. Longing for what? I don't know. For Doris? For the Valley of Virginia and sycamore trees and cicadas unwinding in October? I don't know. God knows.²⁶

To direct this longing away from material objects toward God, John recommends the following discipline based on imitating Jesus Christ.

First, have a habitual desire to imitate Jesus Christ in all your deeds by bringing your life into conformity with His. You must then study His life in order to know how to imitate Him and behave in all events as He would.

Second, in order to be successful in this imitation, renounce and remain empty of any sensory satisfaction that is not purely for the honor and glory of God. Do this out of love for Jesus Christ. In His life He had no other gratification, nor desired any other, than the fulfillment of His Father's will, which He called His meat and food. (Jn. 4:34)

For example, if you are offered the satisfaction of hearing things that have no relation to the service and glory of God, do not desire this pleasure or the hearing of these things.

When you have an opportunity for the gratification of looking upon objects that will not help you come any closer to God, do not desire this gratification or sight.

And if in speaking there is a similar opportunity, act in the same way.

And so on with all the senses insofar as you can duly avoid this pleasure. If you cannot escape the experience of this satisfaction it will be sufficient to have no desire for it.

By this method you should endeavor, then, to leave the senses as though in darkness, mortified, and empty of pleasure. With such vigilance you will gain a great deal in a short time.²⁷

Note the focus of this discipline: the desire for pleasure in material objects unrelated to the service and glory of God. The discipline deprives the person of the inordinate desire for an object rather than the object itself so that the desire may be centered solely on God, thereby preparing the person to receive the transforming loving knowledge of God in contemplation. John writes thus of the disposing quality of the mortification of desires.

To reach satisfaction in all
desire its possession in nothing.

To come to possess all
desire the possession of nothing.

To arrive at being all
desire to be nothing.

To come to the knowledge of all
desire the knowledge of nothing.

.....

When you turn toward something
you cease to cast yourself upon the all.

For to go from all to the all

you must deny yourself of all in all.

And when you come to the possession of the all
you must possess it without wanting anything.

Because if you desire to have something in all your treasure in God is not purely your all.²⁸

B. Disciplines of the Spiritual Self: Faith, Hope, and Charity. The spiritual self is centered in the interior faculties of intellect, memory and will which enable the person to know and to love and to relate to the non-material, transcendent dimension of life. Because natural knowledge, memories, and affective or emotional experiences cannot in themselves transform the person in God, these faculties must be freed from distinct ideas, memories, and experiences to receive God's loving knowledge in contemplation which elevates the person to divine union. According to John, the spiritual disciplines of faith, hope, and charity prepare the spiritual faculties for transformation. He writes:

...in order to journey to God the intellect must be perfected in the darkness of faith, the memory in the emptiness of hope, and the will in the nakedness and absence of every affection.
...the soul is not united with God in this life through understanding, nor through enjoyment, nor through imagination, nor through any other sense; but only faith, hope, and charity (according to the intellect, memory, and will) can unite the soul with God in this life.²⁹

John's discipline of the cognitive faculties of intellect and memory may be seen in the method he proposes for purifying the memory through hope. He states:

The following must be kept in mind: Our aim is union with God in the memory; the object of hope is something unpossessed; the less other objects are possessed, the more capacity and ability there is to hope for this one object, and consequently the more hope; the greater the possessions, the less capacity and ability for hope, and consequently so much less of hope; accordingly, in the measure that a person dispossesses his memory of forms and objects, which are not God, he will fix it upon God and preserve it empty, in the hope that God will fill it. That which a person must do in order to live in perfect and pure hope in God is this: As often as distinct ideas, forms, and images occur to him, he should immediately, without resting in them, turn to God with loving affection, in emptiness of everything rememberable. He should not think or look upon these things for a longer time than is sufficient for the understanding and fulfillment of his obligations, if they refer to this. And then he should consider these ideas without becoming attached or seeking gratification in them, lest they leave their effects in the soul. Thus a man is not required to cease

recalling and thinking about what he must do and know, for, since he is not attached to the possession of these thoughts, he will not be harmed.³⁰

The will, the spiritual faculty which governs the affective dimension of life is prepared for union with God through charity. As a spiritual discipline, charity focuses primarily in freeing one's emotions from inordinate attachments to such diverse objects as status, money, intelligence, charismatic gifts, and religious experiences and centering them primarily in God according to the principle John enunciates regarding the emotion of joy which states that

The will should rejoice only in what is for the honor and glory of God, and the greatest honor we can give Him is to serve Him according to evangelical perfection; anything unincorporated in such service is without value to man.³¹

Applying this principle to temporal goods, John states his method for directing the emotion of joy from them to God.

At the first movement of joy toward things, the spiritual person ought to repress it with remembrance of the principle we are here following: There is nothing worthy of a man's joy save the service of God and the procurement of His honor and glory in all things. His use of things should be directed to this and turned away from vanity, and exclude concern for his own satisfaction and consolation.³²

John's intention in the disciplines of the spiritual self is not to destroy the natural functioning of the cognitive and conative faculties, but only to emphasize that the natural activities of these faculties alone do not unite a person with God in love. Through the disciplines of faith, hope and charity, a person is freed from attachments to specific concepts, memories, and experiences of God and disposed to receive the general loving knowledge of contemplation which transforms the person in God. As these disciplines empty the spiritual faculties of inordinate attachments, the person is gradually transformed in God, as John explains in this passage on the purification of the intellect:

...when a person has finished purifying and voiding himself of all forms and apprehensible images, he will abide in this pure and simple (divine) light, and be perfectly transformed into it. This light is never lacking to the soul, but because of creature forms and veils weighing upon and covering it, the light is never infused. If a person will eliminate these impediments and veils, and live in pure nakedness and poverty of spirit
...his soul in its simplicity and purity will then be immediately transformed into simple and pure Wisdom,

the Son of God. As soon as natural things are driven out of the enamored soul, the divine are naturally and supernaturally infused, since there can be no void in nature.³³

C. Discipline of the Total Self: Prayer. For Saint John, the total self is the entire human person, including both the sensory self and the spiritual self with all their psychological faculties and operations, which in Spanish he describes as "toda esta armonía"--this whole harmonious composite.³⁴ Prayer, the most important of John's spiritual disciplines, prepares the entire human person so that the Spirit of God may directly touch the human spirit uniting the person with God in love.

John understands prayer to involve two stages of development leading to the transformation of the person in God. In meditation, the first stage, the person employs the faculties of the sensory self in discursive reflection upon such topics as the life of Jesus or divine truths. John explains:

Meditation is the work of these two faculties (the two interior bodily senses: the imagination and phantasy), since it is a discursive act built upon forms, figures, and images, imagined and fashioned by these senses. For example: the imagining of Christ crucified, or at the column, or in some other scene; or of God seated upon a throne with resplendent majesty; or the imagining and considering of glory as a beautiful light, etc.; or the picturing of any other human or divine object imaginable.³⁵

The purpose of meditation is to acquire "some knowledge and love of God."³⁶ By drawing delight and satisfaction from one's meditation, the person is enabled more easily to disengage his or her desires from material objects and to center them in God, thus disposing the sensory self for God's Self-communication in contemplation.³⁷

Because of the danger of attachment to the images and sensory pleasures experienced in meditation, the person must eventually set aside this prayer to move to the second stage of prayer which is contemplation, the prayer of the spiritual self.³⁸ The person can recognize when he or she is ready for this new stage of prayer through a sudden inability to practice discursive meditation, a loss of pleasure in spiritual realities, and a deeply felt longing for God.³⁹

By contrast with the discursive activity of meditation, contemplative prayer is passive. During prayer, the person quiets the faculties of the sensory self and allows the faculties of the spiritual self to remain passive in order that the total self may receive the communication of God.⁴⁰ The person gradually experiences this divine communication as a general,

indistinct, mystical loving knowledge. Through this infused knowledge, the person comes to understand both self and God more fully. In seeing one's own self clearly and without distortion in this divine light, the person is enabled to let go of inordinate attachment to self and to center his or her sensory and spiritual energies upon God. As one's own understanding of God grows through this contemplative light, the person increasingly longs for union with God in love. When the loving knowledge of contemplation has purified the person of every attachment to self and filled the whole self with love for God, the state of perfection has been reached and the entire person has been transformed in God.⁴¹

Concluding this discussion of spiritual disciplines in the writings of Saint John of the Cross, we see that fidelity to meditative and contemplative prayer, together with the mortification of desires in the sensory self and purification of the spiritual self through faith, hope, and charity, best dispose the whole person for mystical wisdom, the contemplative gift of God that brings one to the state of transformation.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS. I would like to conclude this presentation with reflections pertaining to research, spiritual guidance, and my own personal journey with Saint John of the Cross.

One cannot read John without being struck by the highly autobiographical nature of his writings. Questions arise: To what extent is his description of the total transformation of the human person in God realized in other human beings? To what extent do persons who practice his spiritual disciplines arrive at personal transformation? These are difficult questions to answer, but I believe they can and should be researched. One approach is through a content analysis of the writings of persons like Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, and Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity who nurtured their spiritual lives on the writings of St. John and who have left us a record of the religious experiences.⁴² Another approach is a systematic, empirical questioning of persons today who follow Saint John of the Cross as their primary guide in the spiritual journey to transformation.⁴³ Finally, introspection may be a way of verifying the validity of John's teaching in one's own experience.

A second question arises regarding psychotherapy and spiritual direction. Assuming the validity of John's description of transformation and the disciplines that dispose one for that state of being, how can a helping person facilitate movement in another human being toward that goal using those disciplines? My own experience in spiritual guidance convinces me that the helping qualities of caring, understanding and genuineness as described by Carl Rogers⁴⁴ play an essential role in the helping process. In a climate created by these attitudes,

the person experiences the necessary personal freedom to explore and discover the distortions in one's own concepts of God and self, to gradually let go of these concepts, and to walk more with an attitude of unknowing about God and self, trusting ever more confidently in God's guidance present in the experiencing process.⁴⁵ As convinced as I am of the importance of these qualities in a spiritual guide, I also believe further research is needed in the guidance process, particularly those factors in the guide that most help a person on their journey to transformation and their practice of spiritual disciplines.

And my own spiritual journey. As one who has lived nearly 25 years in a religious order of men and women founded with the help of Saint John of the Cross and nourished even today, over 400 years later, by his spirit and his writings, this paper has provided me mid-life opportunity to reevaluate the goal of life and the necessary means to that goal left to us by our spiritual father. And while I cannot -- I dare not -- claim the state of transformation for myself and must confess at best an inconsistent practice of the spiritual disciplines he taught us, I am nonetheless more convinced now than ever before of his vision of life as a journey from total attachment to self to total attachment to God, a journey from living isolated in the confining house of my life to living fully and freely in the House of God. And I believe at this mid-point that if I remain faithful to the disciplines of mortification of desires, the theological virtues, and prayer, God will eventually transform my life totally in His, if not in this world, then at the moment of death or beyond.

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5. For example, N2, 12, 2 & 5; N2, 17, 2 & 6; N2, 20, 6; C, Prol., 1-2; C27, 5.
6. C, Prol., 3.
7. N2, 17, 2; Cf. A2, 8, 6; N2, 5, 1; C27, 5; C39, 12.

8. N2, 5, 1; N2, 11, 2; N2, 14, 1; N2, 23, 2; C13, 10; F3, 49.
9. N2, chaps. 18-20.
10. N2, chap. 10; C39, 14; F, Prol. 3-4; F1, 2-6; F1, 19; F1, 23; F2, 2.
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13. A1, 2, 4; N2, 10, 2-3.
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17. A2, 5, 7; see also C22, 3; C31, 1; C39, 4-6; F2, 34; F3, 78.
18. N2, 4, 1-2; See also N2, 3,3; N2, 9, 1-5; N2, 13, 11; N2, 21, 11-12; C38, 3; F1, 3; F2, 34; F3, 28.
19. A3, 2, 8-9; see also A3, 13, 5; C37, 6; C39, 9.
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21. N2, 9, 4; N2, 13, 11; N2, 24, 2; C12, 7-8; C23, 5; C26, 14; C40, 1; F1, 1; F1, 6; F1, 14.
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26. Walker Percy, *Love in the Ruins* (New York: Avon Books, 1978), pp. 20, 22, 91.
27. A1, 13, 3-4.
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29. A2, 6, 1. See also A2, 4, 2-4; A2, 8, 5-6.
30. A3, 15, 1.
31. A3, 17, 2. See also A3, 20, 3; A3, 21, 1; A3, 22, 6; A3, 27, 4; A3, 30, 5; A3, 44, 2.
32. A3, 20, 3. See also A3, 21, 2; A3, 22, 6; A3, 24, 4 & 7; A3, 26, 7; A3, 28, 6; A3, 37, 2. The term "suppression" may be a better translation here of the word reprimirle which would capture better than "repress" the conscious control of emotion.
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34. N2, 11, 4; see also C16, 5 & 10; F3, 7.
35. A2, 12, 3.
36. A2, 14, 2.
37. F3, 32; see also A1, 14, 2-3.
38. A2, chap. 12.; N1, 8, 3.
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FIRST RESPONSE TO KEVIN CULLIGAN

By Eric Carlson

I feel very deeply pleased to be asked. It's fun to talk about these things from the point of view of astronomy. As I listened to your paper I was struck by your indication of the parallel of the helping qualities that work in terms of being a spiritual guide to the interior universe and which also are used in psychotherapy. Of course, I was also thinking how to get the physical universe into all this. Then just suddenly it seemed to lie out there, three beautiful columns. Here was the anterior universe. Here was the interpersonal universe, and here was the physical universe. That's how we experience ourselves. We have this anterior consciousness, the interpersonal and the outer physical. They are all mysteries. We know they are mysteries. And none of us has really plumbed those mysteries all the way. We have little spurts and different times in each one. The unification that I saw was so beautiful.

I am interested in what you called the helping qualities. They can be used to help one go up the first column--the anterior universe. What is purgation and the discursive meditation except psychotherapy? And look at the list of helping qualities--caring, understanding, genuineness, freedom to explore yourself. These pertain to the interpersonal self, and these are helps in discovering distortions in your self concept, in your concepts of others, and in letting go of these distorted concepts. In this way we learn to trust more confidently in the guidance that comes in the experiencing process. I can see how you move from level one, a purgation, up to the level that parallels contemplative prayer. Some people call it Cairo's time.

At any rate it's a place where you recreate experiences and you can create new experiences that are new models of self and others. So you create an interpersonal universe that's brand new in real time. That releases love just incredibly, and that love lifts you right on up to the next level of open union, I'm calling it today.

And now for column three, the physical universe. How could you do it there? Well, look at the helping qualities and think of what is required to be a true scientist. Not someone who is a self appointed expert about everything, or the person who is putting somebody else down. That's not science. Not true science. A real scientist is open and learning and ready to change and sharing. Now listen to those words. Imagine you were going to train or help a scientist to grow or just help someone to be a scientist, and listen to them again: caring, understanding, genuineness, freedom to explore, freedom to discover distortions in concepts of the physical universe to let go of the distorted concepts. The whole history of science is learning to let go of distorted concepts, learning to walk with an attitude of unknowing. What is a scientist?

A scientist is one who walks with the attitude of unknowing. He knows that most of the physical universe is unknown. And also the scientist trusts ever more confidently in guidance by the experiencing process. This is what science is. In physical science we agree to play by certain rules which suggest the helping principles: caring, understanding, genuineness, freedom to explore and to let go of models, and so on. These allow you to be absolutely honest and genuine. You say what you think, even though it might be wrong. You discuss with others and let them talk back to you.

SECOND RESPONSE TO KEVIN CULLIGAN

By C. Alan Anderson

I have some observations and questions to raise about Father Culligan's talk.

I think that St. John is genuinely helpful, as in referring to purifying memory through hope, purifying will through charity, and in referring to us as a harmonious composite whole. While we may not attain any more helpful insights than he did, we do have the advantage of about 400 years of experience and reflection on it that were unavailable to him, and it is our duty to use them as wisely as we can.

Can spiritual disciplines meaningfully be distinguished from mental techniques? For example, is not any act of will, such as a mystic uses at least in preparatory mystical stages, a mental act?

Is it appropriate to use the term "theology" for mystically-given insights? If "theology" is employed in this sense, it should be made clear that it is not being used in the usual way, which refers to a more decidedly rational enterprise.

In what sense can "the human person become God"? Does not this imply a dualistic philosophy? Are we not parts of God (if ever) even before realizing it? What are we to make of John's assertion that even after union with God the soul is "as distinct from God as it was before"?

What about the very term "being"? To what extent is it appropriate, especially if we assume it to be unchanging being? We have heard various people in the course of the past week make assertions that reality or God is unchanging. Certainly God is morally unchanging, but God may be evolving in some way through additional experience. This is a good topic for exploration.

Mary Carman Rose today well referred us to Henri Bergson and to Samuel Alexander. I suggest that we do look at them, but also go beyond them to another philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead, and his followers, referred to by Dick Batzler yesterday. Whitehead called his philosophy the philosophy of organism, but

it commonly is referred to as process philosophy. This is a view which deserves careful consideration when we undertake any metaphysical examination of the topics with which we are concerned. This is a philosophy of creativity, of creative flow, of self-constitution by means of incorporating the possibilities given by God with the past experiences that have come to one in order to make a new self every fraction of a second.

I cannot give you anything like an adequate notion of what this is all about, but I suggest that civilization has turned a corner in the last three-quarters of a century or so, and that this process view is central to understanding both the world of the physicist and the world of the mystic, which are one. It is going to take a terminological revolution to speak of things not in terms of substance but of process, in terms of self-creation, in terms of appropriation of all the elements of the Universe as they are presented to us in our own encounters with them in an essentially religious, essentially extrasensory way. Extrasensory perception is at the very heart of Whitehead's understanding of prehension, of feeling assured of everything's being one, yet made up of freely independent yet interdependent units of experience, of our helping to make the Universe from moment to moment, and of God's being a growing God.

Perhaps none of this can be described altogether adequately by any of us in any terms, but at least we should consider alternatives to considering God to be totally unchanging. Such a conception of a static ultimate is inconsistent with our awareness of God as personal and loving.

We need to look as far as we can, to press on in metaphysical exploration. With the aid of Whitehead and others we shall come to a deeper understanding of a Universe pulsing with joy and creativity, ever growing, ever loving, ever meaningful.

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THE NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE:
FROM TRANSCENDENCE TO TRANSFORMATION

By Kenneth Ring

Abstract: The author stresses and analyzes what he calls the reality of the spiritual and religious effects of NDE'S. He concludes with a speculative hypothesis concerning the reason why at this time many NDE'S are reported and given considerable publicity.

In the five years since the publication of Raymond Moody's book, Life After Life, we have accumulated ample new empirical evidence which supports Moody's contention that a common pattern of transcendental experiences frequently occurs when individuals find themselves on the threshold of death. Those of you who are members of the Association for the Scientific Study of Near-Death phenomena and who receive its newsletter, Anabiosis, will be well aware of this research, but probably many of you will have gathered this general impression, if only from past meetings of this Academy where Dr. Osis and myself, among others, have discussed these matters.

It is not my intention even to summarize this research here, but rather to use it as a foundation for what I do wish to discuss with you -- which I will get to soon enough. Before addressing myself to my main theme, however, I think I should at least mention the major studies dealing with near-death phenomena which have recently been undertaken and on the basis of which I have developed the thesis I will present to you today.

Of course, most of us here are already familiar with the ground-breaking cross-cultural study of deathbed visions reported by Karlis Osis and Erlendur Haraldsson in their book, At the Hour of Death, published in 1977. In addition to this investigation, there are three others dealing specifically with near-death experiences which I wish to cite. There is, first of all, the work of Dr. Michael Sabom, a Georgia cardiologist, who interviewed 107 patients, most of them cardiac arrest cases. Nearly 60% of them reported classic NDE's. Dr. Sabom's findings, which have already been presented in various journals, are now being readied for publication in book form and his book, Near-Death Experiences: A Medical Perspective, to be published by Lippincott, should be available within the next year. Second, there is my own study of 102 cases, aspects of which I have previously presented to members of this Academy. In my research, I found that nearly 50% of those we interviewed who had experienced near death or clinical death reported NDE's. I've also written a book describing my findings in detail. Entitled Life at Death: A Scientific Investigation of the Near-Death Experience, it will be published

by Coward, McCann and Geoghegan and will be released in August of this year. Finally, in a study that, in sheer magnitude, dwarfs anything that has yet been reported, there is the research of an eminent cardiologist, Dr. Fred Schoonmaker of Denver. Schoonmaker has been quietly interviewing near-death survivors since 1961. He has amassed over 2300 cases so far, and is said to have detailed physiological information on many of them. Over 60% of his respondents have reported Moody-type experiences. Although I have read that Dr. Schoonmaker is also working on a book (significantly, he is writing it with a theologian, Loren Young, as co-author) his research so far has not yet been formally published. Dr. Schoonmaker has, however, promised to publish a preliminary article shortly and all of us interested in near-death research are certainly eagerly awaiting the publication of his work in book form.

Now these are only the major studies of near-death phenomena which have been reported. There are other smaller-scale research projects that have contributed to our knowledge of NDE's; and, of course, there is more work in progress, most notably the investigation John Audette is coordinating in Illinois which promises to be the most methodologically sophisticated to date.

All of the reported investigations, then, leave little doubt that the core NDE occurs in a significant number of near-death episodes. Furthermore, on the basis of some recent research by Steve Franklin and me, concerned with suicide-related NDE's, I am now prepared to argue that the NDE itself unfolds in much the same way no matter how one comes close to death. That is, whether one nearly dies as a result of an illness, an operative procedure, a traumatic accident or a suicide-attempt, what one experiences while close to death seems to conform to the prototypic pattern that Moody, particularly, helped to make well known. I'm sure that virtually all of you here know the defining features of these NDE's, but just to be on the safe side, I'd like to remind you that these include such experiential elements as a sense of great peace and well-being, finding oneself out of one's body, floating or drifting through a darkness (sometimes described as a tunnel), becoming aware of a golden light, encountering and having a "dialogue" with a "presence" at which time one's fate may apparently be decided, seeing a panoramic life review, entering into a world of preternatural beauty and recognizing the spirits of loved ones there with whom one may also communicate. Of course, not everyone relating an NDE describes all of these elements--these experiences are actually quite variable in terms of their depth--but most of them include several of these features woven together in a coherent and meaningful way.

When one also takes into account that NDE's tend to overwhelm one's usual sense of time, space and personal identity and to be experienced as "intensely real," it is easy to understand why such experiences might be conceived of as at least bordering on the mystical, if not always fully so. In any

doesn't spill over onto the printed page, but I feel that, the dangers of subjectivity notwithstanding, it ought not to be neglected altogether. One justification for my attitude here is that since what I shall shortly be proposing is essentially an hypothesis rather than a firm conclusion, my ideas and impressions can be assessed through the work of other independent investigators--as I hope it will be.

Finally, some of my ideas stem either from work in progress or in prospect. Since I myself don't feel that there is as yet a secure empirical foundation for much of what I'd like to advance here, I am planning an extensive new study which will deal, in large measure, with the transformative effects of NDE's.

Now having made my apologies, let me begin by saying that from the approach I am taking here, there is at least one point that I feel I can assert confidently on the basis of research already completed by myself and others: Whatever one makes of the "reality" of NDE's themselves, they are unquestionably real in their effects. The research plainly shows that these experiences seem to initiate a process of personal change that leads, in some cases, to self-transformation.

I will get specific about these changes in a little while, but to set the stage for our discussion of them it is necessary first to suggest to you the context that I have come to believe clarifies their underlying dynamic. This, then, is my hypothesis about the meaning of NDE's. I will state it as a series of related propositions:

1. NDEs are essentially moments of revelatory spiritual insight; in short, they constitute "teachings" for the experient.
2. They are functionally "seed" experiences which require time to germinate--if they germinate.
3. They serve to re-direct a person's life, especially to awaken or to deepen his spiritual awareness.
4. If they "take," a person's life will tend gradually to be transformed in the direction of increased sensitivity to spiritual values which will reflect themselves in conduct.

What this hypothesis asserts, then, is that the NDE constitutes a potential for spiritual development and eventual spiritual realization. That, I claim, is the nature of its transformative effects. Obviously, the first two propositions of the hypothesis cannot be tested directly; they are functionally premises. But the last two implications can be evaluated empirically and to the extent they are supported, that would provide some evidence, admittedly only indirect and suggestive, for the entire hypothesis. In any event, we can at least examine how much already existing data supports these implications. We turn, then, from these speculations to the evidence.

If NDE's do tend to awaken a person spiritually, how would we expect this effect to be manifested? In my judgment, a variety of related transformations should be apparent. Let me mention some of the most obvious ones and support them with whatever data I can muster.

First of all, we would expect that following an NDE, a person's life would be lived with a more conscious sense of its purpose and that a person whose life was foundering before would find himself afterward with a greater resolve concerning his life's direction.

Indeed, in Life at Death, I present evidence that one of the most common aftereffects of NDE's is precisely this heightened sense of purpose, even if one's life task can't always be neatly articulated. And although I did not then investigate this issue formally, my impression was that there were quite a few near-death survivors who were leading rather aimless, unfulfilling lives until this experience hit. The following interview excerpt is representative of this kind of case. A woman who nearly died while giving birth said:

"I have suffered from depression. And there were times when I felt, gee, there wasn't really anything to live for.... this [experience] started a whole different life style for me. After this experience, I decided... I'm wasting my life sitting here feeling sorry for myself... So I went back to school, got my high school diploma and a year ago decided that I was going on to nursing school... I've only got this one life and why not do something with it?"

Related to this kind of change is an observation that I wasn't able to document systematically in my initial study, but which I mean to assess carefully in my planned research: I noticed that a fair number of people who underwent NDE's said that afterward they were, like the respondent I just quoted, more concerned to help others. Several said that they got more involved in volunteer work (and I know for a fact they did) and many of them expressed a desire to serve others in some way.

If this is so, why do these changes occur? My guess is that they stem from a deeper lying factor which has to do with a shift in values that takes place following an NDE. From my previous research, this shift seems to be away from materialistic values to ones emphasizing human compassion and love. Again, this is something I mean to investigate more carefully in future work, but let me at least illustrate it here by quoting the comments of one young man who nearly lost his life in a severe automobile accident. He said:

"Somehow we have a more important mission while we're here... We have a more important mission

in our lives than just the material end of it... There are more important things. It [his NDE] showed me the spiritual side... That's all I can say. That (pause) that (pause) that love is important and that every human being on earth is... equal to each other. They're all the same."

A woman who was told that she was clinically dead for nearly three minutes as a result of an operative procedure spoke for many near-death survivors, I believe, when she said:

"I love people now... I've never had the ability to love before. I have a great capacity for listening to people. I think I accept people... as they are. I don't give them my rules to live by... the ability to accept people as they are and to love them for what they are and not for what you want them to be, this has all come about."

Now if people are being opened up spiritually, I think these are some of the kinds of changes we would expect to see. But of course, there should be others. What, for example, happens to an individual's religious views following an NDE?

Those of you who happened to attend last year's conference may remember that this is something which I discussed in a portion of my address at that time. Naturally, I don't wish merely to repeat myself now, so let me simply try to sum up a lot of my material here in a rather pithy way. (Incidentally, I devote the better part of one of my chapters in Life at Death to the issue of changes in religious orientation.)

I think the simplest way for me to do this is to crib from the summary of this chapter and then to cite a few brief examples to give you a qualitative feel for these changes.

"In general, core experiencers (NDErs) tend to become more religious following their near-death episode, non-experiencers do not. The way in which post-incident religiousness manifests itself among core experiencers is primarily in terms of an inward sense of religion: they feel themselves to be closer to God, are more prayerful, are less concerned with organized religion and formal rituals and express a sense of religious tolerance and religious universalism [e.g., "I feel at home in any church."].... Following their incident, they are significantly more inclined than non-experiencers to be convinced that there is life after death... Summing up these changes, it is my inclination to propose that they can be more aptly described by the term 'spiritual' rather than 'religious.' It seems to be that the core experience tends to trigger or intensify one's sense of spiritual awareness whereas coming close to death, without an accompanying core experience, tends to leave religious views and spiritual values largely intact.

event, they are from my point of view certainly transpersonal experiences, suggesting as they do, a greatly expanded state of consciousness.

Now for the past three years I have given a lot of thought to what these experiences represent and what they have to teach us. In addition to the formal research recounted in my book, I have talked to or heard from scores of people who have related to me their own NDE's and have usually told me something of how their lives have been changed as a result of these episodes. I continue to be in touch with a number of my original respondents and cannot help but be aware of how their lives seem to be affected by their NDE. And of course, I have given many talks to diverse audiences about this research and the questions that are asked after these talks also force me to consider the larger meanings of these experiences. There are other factors, too, which keep my attention directed to these issues, but I think I've already said enough to indicate that I'm still actively puzzling over how these experiences should be regarded.

What I'd like to do today, therefore, is simply to share my own provisional understanding of these NDE's with you--because I do indeed believe there is something important to be learned from them. And in keeping with the theme of this conference, I intend to examine these NDE's not from the point of view of their phenomenological properties, but rather from the standpoint of their transformative effects on people's lives. There is, of course, nothing novel in this approach. Philosophers such as William James and Houston Smith, who have been interested in the study of religious experiences, have told us that one way to assess the authenticity of such experiences is to determine their effects on the attitudes and conduct of those who undergo them. For reasons that I hope will become obvious as we go along, I submit that a similar strategy can be useful in exploring the significance of NDE's.

In presenting these views to you, I will be drawing on a variety of materials. Some of it will be based on my own research as reported in Life at Death. In that study, I did make systematic inquiries into various aspects of people's lives where changes might have been expected to occur following an NDE. For example, I asked about such matters as their present attitude toward life, their values, the way they related to others, their religious orientation and conduct and their understanding of death. Often my interviewees would spontaneously tell me of certain life changes concerning matters about which I had prepared no formal questions. I devote two chapters in my book to detailing these after effects, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

In addition to these data, I want to rely somewhat on my personal impressions of the people I interviewed and on what I feel I've learned by continuing to have had intermittent contact with several of them following the initial interview. Naturally, this is for the most part the sort of stuff that

And now for the few brief quotes I promised to exemplify the kind of religious orientation one tends to find among NDErs. A woman who attempted suicide said that through her experience:

"My faith in there being a power higher and greater that is somehow controlling my life has been reinforced."

Another woman said simply:

"I rely a great deal more on God. I know that very definitely He's there."

Finally, a psychiatrist who had a NDE said, with some difficulty:

"Well, [afterward] I felt closer to a - a God, which I had not for years. [Before] I was an agnostic, I didn't know. (Do you feel you know?) I feel much closer that I know. I find myself praying sometimes to (pause) an unknown force."

These changes in one's spiritual orientation, however, don't necessarily always remain at the level of a greater personal awareness of what perhaps I may just call here the spiritual dimension of life. Sometimes, it is as though the NDE itself initiates a kind of a quest for greater spiritual awareness. My impression in talking to people who manifested this kind of concern (and there were not too many who raised it with me--but enough to make it noteworthy) was that this had somehow become very focal in their lives--that they had to follow this path, almost no matter what the consequences.

To illustrate this, consider the case of a woman who had a very deep core experience as the result of a cardiac arrest. In commenting on the current tendencies in her life, she said:

"I think that my greatest desire is to develop cosmic consciousness, greater awareness. And I feel more and more all the time in myself [something] I call 'centering'--being in here and being able to look out at things that I used to find disturbing or upsetting or would be concerned about, now are so unimportant. And I feel that I'm being drawn closer to something meaningful. And I have such a hunger to teach or to tell someone about it or to make them aware of it... I feel that I'm going somewhere. I feel that I'm reaching something... [and] in the past 8 months, I've been meeting people who are asking the same questions I am; it's like I'm being attracted to those with similar vibrations or wavelengths."

In this case, I've remained friends with this woman and I know it isn't just my own opinion that she radiates a very strong spiritual quality, something she herself feels was heightened dramatically by her NDE. That experience has become, it seems,

the central event of her life and she is currently writing a book about it.

Now, obviously, this kind of response to an NDE is not typical, in fact it is quite rare. But nevertheless it seems to me to be extremely significant if one is trying to arrive at an understanding of what the import of these NDEs is. In my judgment, this kind of response offers us a precious clue because what is writ large here is, I believe, often faintly discernable even in--pardon the phrase--garden-variety NDEs.

What is this clue? It is in the first sentence of her statement: "...my greatest desire is to develop cosmic consciousness, greater awareness." Well, I don't have a cosmic consciousness-ometer--and it's not for me to say how she's doing in her quest--but suppose for a moment that these NDEs are programmed to step up the evaluation of one's own consciousness toward spiritual realization. In other words, imagine that NDEs are psychological catalysts which impel the individual in the direction of awakening to the higher meanings of human existence.

Fine, you say--or possibly you say nonsense--but in either case, how could we ever hope to support such an interpretation? At this point, it is necessary for me to remind you that this is the Academy of Religion and Psychical Research. I've already offered you my thoughts on the possible connection between NDEs and religiousness. Now, I merely need to say that I've brought along something for everyone. In short, it's time for psychical research to enter the picture.

It is a banality of the lore of various spiritual traditions that a by-product of advancement on the path that leads to spiritual realization is the manifestation of "psychic powers." As you know, aspirants are commonly told not to allow themselves to get inflated with themselves when these gifts unfold lest they get attached to these powers and lose sight of their original goal. I think many of you will immediately see to what use I intend to put this observation.

If one familiarizes oneself with the literature (both popular and scientific) that deals with NDEs, one quickly becomes aware of the fact that not only do NDEs themselves seem to involve paranormal elements, but that a significant number of the survivors of these episodes claim that afterwards they have either become psychic or that their psychic sensitivities have increased.

Well, when I was getting into this line of work--and applying for research grants--I figured I would have a hard enough time trying to persuade a review panel of scientists and scholars to give me money to study NDEs without bringing psychic phenomena into my proposal! As I said last year, I am a psychologist, not a parapsychologist, anyway, and as the lone transpersonal psychologist in a conservative department, I get enough flak as it is.

Now, of course, I think I got what my cowardice deserved. And I'll tell you why. When I went on my interviewing rounds, sure enough people did occasionally and usually incidentally say or imply that they had noticed an increased psychic sensitivity--or words to that effect--following their NDE. But because I was not really interested in that kind of change at the time, I failed to inquire about it in any systematic way, so that I too, have nothing better to offer you here than recollections of claims made by people never put to the test.

I don't intend to be quite so profligate on my next research venture. So far as I know--and I'd love to know if there are any hard data here--no one has ever systematically investigated whether NDErs do become more psychic following their near-death episode. In a preliminary investigation Mark Gaskill and I are planning, we intend to administer a questionnaire pertaining to psychic experiences to a sample of NDErs and to compare their answers to two other samples: (1) people who have been close to death but who recall no NDE and (2) people who are matched as closely as possible to our NDE sample but who have never been close to death. The results of that initial investigation will determine what we do next. Perhaps I am destined to become a parapsychologist malgré moi.

Since we don't yet have the data here to support this specific hypothesis--and really not enough data to speak to the general 4-part hypothesis I put forth earlier--there is not a lot farther we can go in this direction before we come to the land of pure speculation. We've already mucked around enough in impure speculation just to get this far. But I'd like to ask for one more indulgence if only for the sake of expositional tidiness since I'd hate to leave you with such a welter of intimations, guesses and queries. At this point, then, let me just tell you what I think is going on with these NDEs and what I hope further research will bear out, to the extent that any research can speak to these matters. This will pass for my summing up, too.

In my view, these NDEs are revelatory experiences, akin to mystical experiences and they do disclose to the individual something of the higher spiritual order. As with anything else, some people "get it" clearer than others and some people don't "get it" at all probably, though even their lives may begin to change in significant ways. That is, I don't think NDEs necessarily have to be interpreted in any particular way in order for them to have certain effects. At the same time, I think that people who do become aware of the spiritual qualities of their experience are more likely to be able to learn from it and to use it more effectively in their daily lives.

So these experiences are like seeds, then. They contain the potential for spiritual transformation and the unfoldment of consciousness, but whether and the extent to which that potential is realized depends on the seeming vagaries of life itself about which even I hesitate to speculate.

Now so far I have talked about those experiences only in their individual aspect. A person comes close to death, has an NDE and receives a seed for spiritual acceleration that may or may not take. When it does, a life may be enriched and we who come into contact with that person may find ourselves enriched also. That would seem to be the message--but in my view that's only half of it.

What's the rest? That has to do with the collective significance of NDEs and that is an issue we have neglected totally thus far.

Now presumably these NDEs are nothing new in history, but what is new is that, so far as we know, for the first time in history, large numbers of people are coming forward with these near-death testimonials, thousands of individuals speaking as if with a single voice and sharing a common vision. And a group of chroniclers emerges to transcribe these stories which are then broadcast through a variety of modern media round the world so that millions can know of these experiences. And judging from the response to people like Kubler-Ross and Moody in particular, the interest in learning about these experiences is very great indeed.

Now, I have the kind of mind that can't help asking, "just why is all this happening just now?" Well, sure, maybe it is just happening--for no particular cosmic reason at all, or, as Moody has suggested, perhaps it is traceable to improved resuscitation technology making available to us a much larger pool of survivors than we had access to before. For myself, though, these answers don't quite suffice. I think there's more to it than that. And for what it's worth, I'll risk one final speculation.

Consider the collective testimony of near-death survivors. What is it? Death is a beautiful experience and there is nothing whatever to fear in it--and, you will continue, you can't be wiped out. That's what these experiences seem to be telling us. Now the question is, why is this message particularly appropriate to this time in history?

Could it be that we are indeed, as so many feel, bound to go through a time of megadeath--a time of such massive physical destruction that none of us can really conceive of the sheer, overwhelming horror of it? A time when billions of people could lose their lives in ghastly ways? What could inoculate us against such a specter? How could we face our own deaths and those of our loved ones with equanimity and faith under such circumstances?

The answer, of course, will already have suggested itself to you. We are used to having our prophets come singly, but why couldn't it be that this legion of near-death survivors collectively serve a prophetic function, reminding us of the ancient message that we are spirit and that at death our spirit will live on imperishably.

Perhaps not everyone needs to have his faith restored in this way, but in a secular age, perhaps it is more necessary than many would think. And these days, more timely, too.

I do not pretend to have any special insight here. I do not know the answers to the questions I have raised. But researching NDEs certainly has made me think about them.

Professor Kenneth Ring is a member of the Department of Psychology at the University of Connecticut.

RESPONSE TO KENNETH RING

By Frank C. Tribbe

I was very pleased for the opportunity to read Dr. Ring's paper in advance, and I greatly enjoyed the paper, which I feel very ably summarizes the Near Death Experience field, and makes some important new suggestions. I certainly do agree with him that a very important and common feature of the NDE cases is the life-changing factor. In this respect it seems to parallel the reports of mystical experience in common folk, perhaps first sampled and summarized by Dr. Andrew Greeley in 1974 (Sociology of the Paranormal, Sage Publications, 1975), and more recently by our Academy trustee, Dr. Mary Carman Rose, who is Project Officer for SFF's Mysticism Survey under the general cognizance of its Research Committee, chaired by Mr. Boyce Batey, the Academy's Executive Secretary. I also feel that Ring's four propositions as to the meaning of NDEs will be of especial value to experimenter/researchers who plan work in this field in the future.

I propose to make three points, somewhat related to Dr. Ring's paper. In connection with the first one, I note that Ring, in summarizing the main or most common features of a "classic" or "moody-type" NDE, presents an overview that is certainly of a benign, if not heavenly, situation. In passing, it may be noted also that the Osiris/Haraldsson book, At the Hour of Death (Avon, 1977), skirts most of the profound spiritual issues of deathbed visions, and that Moody's books (Life After Life, and Reflections On Life After Life, Mocking Bird/Bantam, 1975-7) pointedly eschew both parapsychology and religion. All three books do, however, report anecdotal material that fairly and consistently can be described as involving heavenly realms. In contrast, Dr. Maurice Rawlings treads heavily into this area, and brashly concludes in his book, Beyond Death's Door (Thos. Nelson, 1978), that over half of the NDE cases reflect a frightening or hellish "location" or experience. That book was ably reviewed by Dr. Michael Sabom in Vol. 1, No. 3 of Anabiosis and by Martin Ebon in the March 1980 issue of FATE, with both of them rejecting roughly 90% of Rawlings' claims. I tend to think they were too kind to him. A careful reading of the book convinced me

that the only relevant case cited was his own, and the conclusion about it was unwarranted. All the other cases were apparently hearsay that was second-hand or worse, and were unsupported. However, my point is this: Rawlings might possibly be right - though, if so, most likely to a much lesser degree than he claims - in spite of his inability to write (and possibly to investigate) convincingly in a very technical field where he is an apparent stranger. So, I suggest that in Ring's proposed work on suicide NDEs and in other work on NDEs, the effort should be made to verify or falsify the Rawlings claim. We need to know.

My second point is to bring to your attention a man, an organization, a work, and a book, all in England. Sir Alister Hardy, an Emeritus Professor of Zoology at Oxford University, in 1969 there founded the Religious Experience Research Unit to collect, classify, analyze and evaluate first-hand accounts of persons who experience an awareness of a benevolent non-physical power that appears to be partly or wholly beyond and far greater than the individual self. Among the purposes of the study have been the effort to understand man's spiritual experiences and feelings, and to find out what effect these feelings may have on the life of the individual. Recently released is Hardy's book, The Spiritual Nature of Man: A Study of Contemporary Religious Experience, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979) which is based on the first eight years of operation of the Religious Experience Research Unit. In it the Unit's present aggregate findings are presented under twelve headings and a further 88 subdivisions, based on over 4000 experience reports. Hardy argues for the amalgamation of scientific and religious phenomena by regarding them as part of each other, and insists that "the spiritual side of man is not the product of intellectuality." In an overview as to the reactions of his 4000 experiencers to their experiences, he says that mostly it was accepted, and could radically transform a person's life; repeatedly, those who experienced the divine phenomenon felt a certainty that all was for the best.

My third point is to bring to your attention another man, his quest, and his latest book, also from England. Dr. Robert Crookall, geologist, botanist, psychologist, now well into his ninety-first year, is certainly the oldest active psychical researcher in Britain, and Colin Smythe Publishers have now released (1978) his book, What Happens When You Die; this is his fourteenth book that either primarily or secondarily studies intimately the reports of out-of-body experiences. Since the OOBIE is a crucial part of nearly all NDEs, I personally feel that in NDE research we cannot know too much about the OOBIE. Crookall's method is to scrutinize and compare verbal reports of out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences, on the one hand, with statements describing the death-transition and early post-mortem periods as provided by mediums and attributed to spirits who have survived death. His point, of course, is that the data adduced is singularly consistent, whether derived from the experience of leaving the body temporarily during an OOBIE or NDE, or leaving it permanently at death. Crookall tries to show

by logical development, giving evidence at each stage, that the links in the chain of his reasoning are strong and well made; he comes close to proving, I believe, that man is a multiple being, and that that part of him that gives character and personality - his soul - is immortal. As to this book, Crookall says, "I describe in far greater detail what actually happens to a person when he dies." His hypotheses are particularly interesting, and one of them is that sudden death is followed by experiences unlike those after gradual death; such a suggestion, it seems to me, is well worth keeping in mind in NDE research.

RESPONSE TO KENNETH RING

By John R. Audette

First of all, I would like to compliment Ken on an excellent presentation and on a truly thought-provoking paper. He has expressed some rather powerful ideas, to say the least, and has left us with much grist for the mill.

In looking at present day near-death research, it should be noted that Ken's study is among the best from a methodological standpoint. I have complete confidence in the quality of his data and in his interpretation of these data. I find his presentation somewhat of a hard act to follow since he has gone farther publicly in his speculation and theory-building on this topic than any other spokesperson in the field whom I know of. I applaud him for his excursion into the land of fantasy - I mean inspired conjecture - but am thankful that he has so far chosen to go there only as a tourist.

Ken has essentially expounded on the well known dictum espoused by W.I. Thomas, a prominent sociological theorist who coincidentally belonged to the esteemed Chicago School. His theorem, simply put, is that what is perceived as real is real in its consequences regardless of whether it involves any aspect of the so-called objective or consensual reality. There is no question that these experiences occur and have occurred throughout history. Moreover, there is no question that persons who report these experiences have little doubt about their validity and significance in a personal context. And, there is also no question that, regardless of the ontological implications, these experiences do have a profound and pronounced psychoemotional impact. So, in short, I find myself in agreement with Ken regarding his thesis about the overall transformative effects of the near-death experience. I would, however, like to offer a few thoughts to enlarge upon the perspective he presents.

Let me begin by pointing out that experiencers do not undergo any kind of a uniform metamorphosis following their respective mystical journeys. Each has varying degrees of success in translating the essence of their experience behaviorally and attitudinally. The integration of these experiences into an individual's

world view and lifestyle may or may not occur and is often a gradual evolutionary process; they do not appear to trigger any spontaneous or radical cognitive reorganization which I would regard as explicitly characteristic. What I am attempting to suggest is that while many are inclined to become more humanistic in their disposition and orientation over time, there is no great or quick compulsion to forsake materialism in favor of an ascetic or monastic existence. To the best of my knowledge, no experimenter has turned over the total of his life savings to charity or traded in the box spring and mattress for a bed of nails.

Secondly, there is no way to reverse time and trip back into history to ascertain what these individuals were like prior to the NDE. It is therefore impossible to determine, in quantitative or qualitative terms, the actual degree or complexion of personal transformation. Additionally, there has not been any systematic attempt to study after-effects of the NDE on a longitudinal basis. Consequently, there is a very meager data base on which to predicate these observations. All of life is a process of being and becoming, so we are told. There is constant change about us through the passing of time. Who can say how much these persons would have changed without benefit of the NDE? Were they ripe for change and the NDE simply a well-timed catalyst? Could not other precipitants have presented themselves to affect the same or similar behavioral and attitudinal alterations, e.g., reading Moody's Life After Life or Seth's The Nature of Personal Reality or seeing the movie "Oh God?" I do not dispute the fact that the NDE is a powerful change agent, but how much change to attribute to it is difficult to determine.

I concur with Ken that the NDE represents a strong opportunity for spiritual development and awakening, but I would add that so too is the near-death incident by itself, or in other words, the very process of coming close to death without an accompanying experience. In fact, I would assert that the direct confrontation with our own mortality has equally profound transformative effects. For instance, in the research I am presently conducting in Peoria with three other colleagues, we have studied 16 episodes to date. One person of the 16 reported a classical near-death experience and the others reported no recall of anything unusual during the crisis event. One man, a cardio-pulmonary resuscitee who did not report an experience, described to me the same transformative effects which Ken attributes to experiencers. And interestingly, the one person who reported an experience told me that she was trying to forget the entire incident and block it from her mind because it was too overpowering and overwhelming to deal with. She was in fact very reluctant to reveal her experience and did so only after considerable persuasive effort. She expressed a resolve to continue leading her life as though nothing had happened. Whether she can or will, admittedly, remains to be seen.

Regarding Ken's reference to the collective significance of NDEs and his personal feeling that their current revelation might

be strangely auspicious, I should say that this is an issue, along with the increased psychic sensitivity among experiencers, which near-death researchers have been quietly discussing amongst themselves for some time now. So far as I know, this is the first public mention of either consideration. By way of creating a more balanced perspective on the matter of collective significance, permit me to say that I choose not to be a proponent of the megadeath theory, if only for the sake of contrasting argument. Rather, I lean toward Moody's position which in print anyway, maintains that improved technology and communication accounts for the increased frequency of reports.

I would venture to say that if the same technology were available to scientists of earlier eras, the same findings would have emerged; which is to say that perhaps the NDE reports of today bear no especial prophetic significance for contemporary times. After all, we know of accounts from the days of Plato, which I would gladly share if time permitted, with the same characteristic features and transformative effects as present day reports. But I do believe that what is unique about these phenomena in our time is the increased appetite to know more about them, an increased sensitivity to them, and a stronger thirst for greater empirical insight into the enigma of death, which may simply be a by-product of prevailing secularism.

DIALOGUE WITH AUDIENCE

Unidentified. I have two comments. One, John Audette's perspective on the significance of the near-death experience is set up in contrast to Ken Ring's and indeed denies it. But the reverse is not true, John. I think that Ken's perspective includes what you have to say but gives a meaning to it. That is to say, we can recognize that there is greater reporting of near-death experiences because of the communications situation. But that still can be seen from a philosophical or spiritual perspective, which Ken has offered about the meaning of even the presence of broadcasting technology today. There is always positive and negative applications of technology. Nuclear technology especially could be the means of mega-deaths today. It's one of the delicious ironies of life that technology also may be serving as the means to deal with the psychological implications of mega-death.

The second comment is aimed at aligning the near-death experience to religious traditions. All the cases, with the exception of the suicide cases, are spontaneous, rather than induced. But religious traditions have a history of dealing with induced near-death experiences. And the purpose of this, as I understand, is to induce a changed sense of self, a change in one's basic experience of self-identity which normally is limited to the body or to the physical realm when this change is induced

through a near-death experience, one gets awareness, direct experiential awareness, of dimensions beyond the physical which religious traditions say are indicative of our cosmic origin and destination. Specifically in Christianity baptism, at least according to esoteric Christianity, involved total immersion of the body in the water to the point of probably inducing a near-death experience. At least, this is probably what was intended. So the current form of baptism in Christianity, sprinkling with water or just making a little cross on the forehead is a very, pardon the expression, watered down version of what was originally intended as an initiatory experience into the direct understanding, or at least an initial understanding, of the meaning of immortality.

Howard Mickel: I'm indebted to Ken Ring first of all for his paper on the map of human consciousness which appeared in General Transpersonal Psychology. I always use that in my classes. And now about the work on near-death experiences that is very spiritually significant. Robert J. Lifton in his Living and Dying points out that the traditional modes for symbolic immortality aren't working; and I think the near-death experience, whether we want it to or not, is serving as a sort of spiritual witness. When I go over the material of a near-death experience in class and ask the students, "How many of you as a result of this unit are changing your idea of death?" about 60% of their hands go up, which makes me feel very responsible for what we are studying here.

Your study of the near-death experiences and the transpersonal experiences that occur seem remarkably similar to Stanislaus Groff's work in psychedelics and to JoAnn's experience here today. What is the significance of these parallels? Are there similar physiological triggers for this? I think Groff said that most of these people have transpersonal experiences. Does this mean that not 50% but everyone will have a Moody-type near-death experience? What can we make out of that?

Kenneth Ring: My answer to Howard Mickel's query would be that just as it doesn't seem to matter how you almost die physically, it doesn't seem to matter how your ego dies. Whether it is through a near-death experience, a psychedelic episode, a mystical interlude, any kind of spiritual experience, if you go through the experience of ego-death then, if Groff is right, it's always followed by rebirth and rebirth is followed by transformation. So I see the near-death experience as only one pathway to the process of transformation that I talked about. And I don't think there is anything particularly unique about the kinds of experiences that are associated with dying, at least insofar as their ultimate transformative effects are concerned.

Paul Colish: I'm presently involved in research in this particular area, but mainly in the ancient traditions that involved physical death of the body in The Egyptian Book of the Dead, and how these ancient ways relate to the current work that is being done today by Moody and Ross. One thing that I

was particularly interested in in your talk, Ken, was when you said, that you wondered whether people were becoming more psychic as a result of their experiences. Considering the work that is being done now in Menlo Park with the far sighting of different situations, and other work that is being done throughout the country and throughout the world indeed, I have come to this personal conclusion that just about everyone, every human entity on the earth, is psychic, and the degree of sensitivity of that psychicness is open to experiences like the near-death experiences that many people are having today.

One other point I want to bring up. Ken Ring talked about why are these things coming about now. Certainly I believe it is because of technology. But I did a preliminary statistical analysis on the number of people that were born before 1925 and the number of people born after, and the relationship of those statistics as to the psychical experiences that have occurred then and now. The relation was rather astounding in just this very preliminary study in that in these last thirty years it seems to be growing in multiples. Whether it is because of technology or whether it is simply because we are approaching a certain time or a certain age where things may happen, I do not know. I have put this kind of research on a back shelf and hope at a later time go into this in more depth. But as concerns the psychical sensitivity, I was wondering if you know of any areas where this can be measured scientifically at this point.

Kenneth Ring: I think my excuse here is that, as I said in my talk, I'm not a parapsychologist and I don't really know the area well. To start with we will administer a questionnaire to inquire into a variety of possible psychic experiences that people claim to have had as a result of this experience, and then compare them with what other people in the other two categories that I mentioned may have said. And then, depending on how those results work out, perhaps ask some of the people in our samples to show whether or not they can manifest psychic experiences. I myself was hoping to learn from somebody else here whether there are data along these lines from which I might construct a better kind of program with experimental research. I'd be interested in your paper, but maybe I can ask the audience the question that you have put to me. Does anybody know of research along these lines with regard to the development of, or the increase in, psychic sensitivities following a mystical or near-death experience?

Boyce Batey: Ken, it is not formalized research but only burgeoning out of the experiential reports of those who have had it. Penny Serama in Philadelphia, for example, developed a great deal of psychic sensitivity as did Helen Nelson. I don't know how many others out of your own research report that experientially without doing a pattern and content analysis finding that commonality.

Kenneth Ring: Unfortunately, I don't either Boyce. It's exactly the problem with my research, and I am familiar with the kind of data that you mention. I hope I'll be able to get data that's more systematic than occasional individual reports, but that's all I know of too.

Unidentified: The last questioner touched on a point which reminds me that both Ken and John have given suggestions as to why it may be that in the last five to ten years there has been such a rash, may I say, of NDE cases coming to our attention. I suggest that for the last fifteen years we have been evolving a new consciousness in the world and particularly the United States. There is a new openness and willingness to discuss publicly the psychic field, the spiritual field, the consciousness field. This was not true thirty years ago at all. I know when I first started going to New York City to attend the ASPR meetings it had to be a secret. I couldn't talk to anyone in Washington, D.C. I used to ask Gardner Murphy, President of the ASPR, who is there in Washington. I can even talk to. He couldn't tell me. The last fifteen years we've seen a gradual burgeoning of this willingness to discuss the spiritual and psychic field. It is my suggestion, Ken, that this more than anything else, perhaps, has brought on this flood of cases. Not so much because of the factors perhaps that you and John have mentioned, but because people generally have been willing to talk about this.

Boyce Batey: And another factor that has contributed is that in the past decade refinements in resuscitation technology have developed. And the teaching of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation techniques to millions of people in the United States by the Red Cross and others have developed the ability to resuscitate over a thousand in the United States alone each year who previously would have died and stayed dead and who would not have ever had the opportunity to speak of it.

Unidentified: But even resuscitated they wouldn't have talked about it but for this climate we have today.

Unidentified: Why this climate difference?

Unidentified: Well this is gradual. This has come on gradually.

NON-HYPNOTIC REGRESSION: FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

By Frank C. Tribbe

Abstract: After noting the criticisms of hypnotic regression, the author describes five types of non-hypnotic regression.

Valid and valuable as it is, hypnosis has had a bad press. Use of hypnosis for entertainment spectacles on the one hand, and the assumption - resented by many - that the subject is putting himself in the "control" of the hypnotist, are the factors largely responsible for commonly-held attitudes that consciously or subconsciously reject or resist hypnotic induction for themselves or others.

Yet, the "hypnosis family" of altered states may well be one of the most valuable. Dr. Milan Ryzl, twelve to fifteen years ago in Prague, and Charles Honorton, quite recently at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, have clearly demonstrated that hypnosis is a highly effective technique for training, focusing and augmenting the human ability to produce psi effects. At the same time, increasing numbers of clergymen have found hypnosis an effective and timesaving method for improving the quality of their pastoral counseling (spectacular results of limited scope have been reported by books for the general reader; e.g., Gretchen, I Am by Carroll E. Jay, Wyden Books, 1977; and Reincarnation and The Interim Between Lives by E. Arthur Winkler, Esoteric Publications, 1976).

Because of the negative attitudes concerning hypnosis, as above noted, and of my conviction as to the underlying value of the "hypnosis family" of altered states, I have devoted considerable time in recent years to identifying and experimenting with various non-hypnotic techniques which seem to have the same property as hypnosis for providing avenues to altered states of consciousness.

In considering the altered states of consciousness that can be reached by non-hypnotic regression, I am assuming that these states can properly be described as transpersonal [that is, spiritual (C. T. Tart) - sometimes identified as concerning phenomena directly relevant to the ultimate, positive nature of man (Anthony Sutich)], and as transcendent [that is, beyond conventional experience and knowledge, and largely beyond comprehension (Webster's)]. However, I do no more than suggest that these states for some people may also be transformative. But I do suggest it, on the basis that the data, though largely anecdotal at this point, are shot through with repeated hints of this transformative aspect. Additionally, I note that conventional hypnotism seems also to be giving us these hints when used for regression therapy [I am thinking specifically of books for the general reader by Drs. Dell Leonardi (The Reincarnation of John Wilkes

Booth, Devin-Adair, 1975), Helen Wambach (Reliving Past Lives, Harper & Row, 1978; Life Before Life, Bantam, 1979), and Edith Fiori (You Have Been Here Before, Ballantine, 1978).]

After defining my terms, I will identify, describe and discuss briefly, four methods or techniques and two sub-types of non-hypnotic induction to altered states of consciousness that I have found. These can be used for regression to prior time periods - in this life, in a prior life, in an apparent period of pre-existence, or to a between-lives interval. As the hypnotherapists I just named have asserted in their books, it is not necessary for the therapist or the subject to believe in reincarnation for the process to be effective and meaningful--and even without such belief significant healings do occur. (Please note, of course, that there are a number of other highly effective non-hypnotic techniques for inducing altered states, But I do not discuss them here since they do not readily lend themselves to use for regression; e.g., biofeedback, suggestology, OOB conditioning, remote viewing, visualization for physical, mental and psychological therapy.)

As to defining hypnosis for the purposes of this paper, I offer a working hypothesis definition, taking into account two anomalies. The first is that, real as the altered states of consciousness are, we have no objective way of effectively and significantly distinguishing between most of them. In a paper a few years ago, Dr. Stanley Krippner listed over 40 altered states; obviously, this is little more than labelling, and probably involves considerable overlapping. In fact, our best distinctions are merely the identification of the induction technique or cause, and do not define the resulting state. In a blind sampling of laboratory records (e.e.g., e.k.g., e.m.g., g.s.r., and others of our not-so-subtle measuring devices) we would be hard put to say whether the clinical read-out was reporting on hypnotic trance, psychic trance, a faint, deep meditation, or an anesthetized state, for example. The second anomaly is that hypnotism, specifically, has never been satisfactorily defined by a consensus among its practitioners.

Accordingly, the working hypothesis or rule-of-thumb definition I offer is this: If the subject can, at any time on his own volition, formulate a desire to and resume a normal, waking-consciousness state merely by opening his eyes, then the altered state was non-hypnotically induced; if he cannot open his eyes and return to normal, waking-consciousness at any moment he wishes, or if he cannot form the thought or wish to do so, then the altered state was hypnotically induced.

The first technique I will mention is Hyperemperia. This name and technique were developed by Dr. Don Gibbons, a hypnotherapist, largely because of the negative attitudes toward hypnosis that I mentioned at the beginning. His book, Beyond Hypnosis (Power Publishers, 1973), describes his technique and a wide variety of uses with induction models for each. In the

orientation session he tells the subject that this is not hypnosis, and that hyperemperia may be regarded as the opposite of hypnosis; that the subject will remain fully conscious and will remember everything that occurs. The induction models he provides are very carefully structured to avoid use of the word "sleep" and any other word usually associated with hypnotic induction. The procedure, however, is simply one of inducing deep relaxation, with guided imagery and suggestion. Age regression and life regression are demonstrated in Gibbons' models and examples.

The next approach, which was actually earlier in point of time than Gibbons' proposals, is the Awareness Technique developed by William Swygart, and published in 1970-5 in a series of four booklets by Theatre University Inc., Wellesley Hills, Mass. The induction procedure begins with light massage of forehead and feet, and proceeds to guided imagery, suggesting an extension of the consciousness beyond the body. The latter is done in a series of steps, and during each step the subject is repeatedly asked to orally confirm that he has accomplished the suggested action. Typically, the subject may thereafter be asked to view and describe his own frontdoor, then his home from 500 feet in the air; the next stage is to ascend until the earth is out of sight. After a further brief orientation, the subject is asked to come back to earth at a prior period in time, and is then led to describe what he sees and is doing in that life situation. One of the keys of the technique is to ask a steady stream of questions and to keep the subject talking responsively to the conductor in reply to the questions. The "re-living" of the death experience is usually not upsetting even though the death may have been traumatic. The transition from one life to another is effected by the simple expedient of having the subject rise up into space, and then return to earth in another lifetime.

The next style I report is called the Christos Experience, and is chronicled in a series of three paperback books (Windows of the Mind, Worlds Within, and A Door to Eternity), published in 1974 et seq. by Arrow Books in London; the writer is G. M. Glaskin, whose experiments and experiences were conducted in Australia. These books are principally the transcriptions of numerous tapes from recordings made at sessions conducted by Glaskin. The technique seems, however, to be identical to that of Swygart, but without any acknowledgement in that respect. One difference between them seems to appear in the later work of each: Swygart seems to be veering farther into the philosophy of metaphysics, in the most esoteric sense of those terms, while Glaskin is exploring additional altered states, such as remote viewing, and lucid dreaming.

The fourth non-hypnotic technique that lends itself to regression efforts is Guided Meditation. Nearly ten years ago I developed a pre-structured, written approach, through the use of especially tailored texts, to be read to lead SFF groups in guided imagery. A variety of samples, for use, and for illustration to encourage the development of one's own texts, was later published

by SFF as a booklet entitled, Creative Meditation (1975-6-8). I had two main theses: first, that a precise, written text permitted a fully-structured and sharply-focused guidance toward a specific purpose or result; the second thesis was the belief that the experience is of two distinct parts - the "approach" stage (while the guidance is being read) and the stage of full or complete meditation in the silence. Both stages are, in my opinion, altered states of consciousness. The approach stage is perhaps unique, in that, by a sort of mental straddle, one partakes simultaneously of normal, waking-consciousness as he listens to the guidance being read to him, and at the same time he is able to reach and "will" changes in or "program" his subconscious, his autonomic systems, his organs, glands, physical and mental processes--all of which are normally subliminal and beyond his conscious reach or influence. Guided meditation used in this fashion can be adapted readily to achieve a large variety of purposes.

Finally, I would mention the technique of Guided Meditation that is perhaps activated by prayer. Ruth Carter Stapleton is one of the most effective exponents of this procedure, and she calls it Faith Imagination, leading in many instances, she believes, to a "healing of the memories" as to scarring traumas that have happened, usually in childhood or even earlier. The guided imagery that she uses apparently effects a subliminal regression that sometimes, but not always, results in a regurgitation of early memories if not an actual re-living of the experience; she claims that neither conscious memory nor a re-living of the experience is necessary to a healing. Consistent with the views of most child psychologists, she considers that most injurious traumas occur before the age of five; but beyond the views of conventional psychology, she insists that such trauma may also occur at childbirth, during the nine months' sojourn in the womb, and in the events surrounding conception. Her guidance takes the form of a prayer to Jesus, whom she asks to review the life of each individual in the group, period by period, as she prays and she asks Him also to heal the memory of each trauma that He may find along the way. The imagery she sketches suggests each event and period, beginning with conception, and she uses a stairway up which Jesus is to move with each individual, upon which each step represents a year of life. The remission of fear, harmful attitudes, have in many instances been effected through her ministry in seemingly miraculous fashion, by the use of this non-hypnotic regression technique of guided imagery and prayer. Case reports that Mrs. Stapleton writes about in her books, The Gift of Inner Healing (Word, 1976) and The Experience of Inner Healing (Word, 1977), strongly suggest that a common result is a life transference, which seemingly grows stronger as an after-effect in the passing months.

So, in conclusion, I suggest a more careful consideration in future consciousness research of the techniques of non-hypnotic regression for two reasons: one, because it avoids the objections of many persons to conventional hypnosis, and two, it holds promise

as a simple avenue to a transformative state of consciousness.

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MYSTICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: REALIZATION OR PSYCHOPATHOLOGY?

Mary Jo Meadow

Abstract: The author wishes to illumine the distinctions between mystical growth and psychopathology. She explores theories of similarities and differences between them. She concludes that although both experiences tap similar aspects of consciousness there are nonetheless irreducible differences between them and she lists some of these.

At the turn of the century, William James wrote: "In delusional insanity, paranoia, . . . we have a diabolical mysticism, a sort of religious mysticism turned upside down" (1902/1961, p. 334). The experiences of some people show, at the same time, evidence both of mysticism and psychopathology. How do we determine if there are differences?

Some Psychological Understandings

Case History Material: Daniel Schreber spent half his life in mental institutions. He saw himself "locked into" a stressful relationship with God whose "miracles"--which included a sex transformation--were intended to destroy his reason (Schreber, 1955). Custance (1951) obsessively reduced all of experience to a "positive" and "negative" dualism which he paradoxically fused in such concepts as "religious lust" and a "negative godness of mercy." Hennell's (1967) thinking focused on cosmic destruction from which came an enigmatic visionary double of himself--a numinous and paradoxical "savior." Boisen (1936-1971; 1960) reported complex revelations with heroic religious tasks for him to accomplish. Since both mysticism and insanity involve similar-sounding experiences, it can be difficult to distinguish a mystic's personal religious world-view from a psychotic delusion or madness (See Bregman, 1977; Wilber & Meadow, 1979).

Regressive Interpretations of Mysticism: Mysticism has been seen as an attempt to return to a state of infantile omnipotence (Freud, 1939/1961) and as frustrated sexual drives (Leuba, 1925). Prince and Savage saw both mysticism and schizophrenia as regressive withdrawal, but said "a psychosis is a pressured withdrawal with...an incomplete return. A mystical state is a controlled withdrawal and return" (1972, p. 132). Wapnick argued that retreat from social realities characterizes both states, but explained that "differences in the preparation reflect the essential difference between the mystic and the schizophrenic" (1969, p. 65). The mystic's purpose is expansion of consciousness, while the psychotics flee a world in which they cannot function.

Similarities and Distinctions: Zales believes that mystics and schizophrenics alike feel they are rejecting something bad, feel alienated, have been disappointed in interpersonal relationships, and have constructed for themselves a more gratifying reality. Mystics, however, engage in only a partial retreat which can facilitate adjustment and are able to share their world view with some others (1978, pp. 260-265). Laing (1979) claims that schizophrenics battle images that religious persons used to call demons, and that their experiences are similar to those forming the original wellspring of religion. Greeley sees both experiences as altered states but says that "to compare mysticism with schizophrenia is like comparing bread with steak because they are both foods" (1974, p. 40). Campbell says that the "schizophrenic patient is actually experiencing inadvertently that same beatific ocean deep which the yogi and saint are ever striving to enjoy; except that, whereas they are swimming in it, he is drowning" (1979, p. 200). Campbell (1972) also argues that preparedness is a key difference in the experiences.

Experiences in Altered States of Consciousness: Fischer (1971; 1978) proposed a model of altered states of consciousness based on spatial analogies. It depicted two continua upon which the individual can travel away from ordinary everyday waking consciousness: over-arousal and under-arousal. One can easily flip back and forth from being over- or under-aroused both in ordinary waking consciousness and at various distances from it. Within everyday consciousness one ranges from relaxation to the heightened arousal of conducting one's daily activities.

Various meditation techniques--such as absorptive yogic meditation or zazen practice--involve lowering arousal from that of ordinary waking consciousness. On the side of over-arousal lie states of heightened anxiety, dreaming, and creative insight. Somewhat deeper in consciousness with under-arousal are the experiences of awed absorption, deep egoless sleep, and zen satori. Correspondingly, in over-arousal, there are visions, locutions, and ecstasies. The high arousal just prior to sexual orgasm led Fischer to call it "a poor man's ecstasy" (1978, p. 36). Many "high" experiences, schizophrenia, "possessions," and some hallucinogenic drug experiences also relate to this degree of arousal. It is the realm of religious experience par excellence (Wilber & Meadow, 1979). Mental and perceptual processes are "fragmented"--a characteristic feature of schizophrenic episodes.

At an even deeper level, subject-object distinctions disappear. Over-arousal can produce catalepsy (muscular rigidity)--found both in some psychopathology and in ecstatic union with a personalized "image" of deity. Yogis call the corresponding under-aroused experience samadhi with seed (or content). These experiences yield with increased over- and under-arousal to mystical rapture and seedless (without content) samadhi respectively. Finally, in Fischer's model, both paths converge in the experience of "the self"--the final reach of consciousness, the originating void that underlies the phenomenal world.

Such a model of consciousness suggests that schizophrenic (or other psychotic) experiences have much in common with mystical ones. However, the deeper mystical states involve a transcendence of subject-object dualism that is not usual in psychosis and that appears to go "beyond" psychotic realms of consciousness. It does not rule out "using" a psychotic episode as a springboard to explore deeper mystical levels of consciousness.

Evaluating Psychosis and Mysticism: Regarding religion, James insisted: "By their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots" (1902/1961, p. 34). Stace (1960) similarly held that the course or cause of mystical experience does not determine its genuineness. What then do we say of mysticism and psychopathology? Kallenberger (1978) offered three characteristics by which altered states of awareness can be evaluated: the experience itself, awareness, and state of being.

The Experience: Elwood offered two criteria for considering an experience mystical: "First, the experience must have sufficient intensity. . . . Second, the experience must be in a context that makes the mystical interpretation the most available" (1980, p. 33). Would-be mystics seem clearly to pass through experiences similar to psychopathology. Further, it cannot be demonstrated that psychosis can deliver one to the fringes of consciousness as can mysticism. Psychotic experiences typically also occur in settings that do not make a mystical interpretation the most appropriate one--even in spite of the religious language some psychotic individuals use to describe their experiences. Psychotic episodes may be considered an "invitation" to mysticism--to probing more deeply into consciousness; most psychotics probably do not accept such an invitation.

Awareness: Mysticism is "a realization. . . that something is true. . . . It would come to religious knowledge and be what in various traditions is called wisdom" (Kallenberger, 1978, p. 179). More lasting cognitive changes occur than simple perceptual experience. Clark describes one expected change: "Mystical experience develops compassion and sympathy partly because it breaks through the superficial levels of seeming and appearance to that level of personality where all people are one" (1965, p. 15/). This appears an outcome highly unlikely in psychosis. Typically, psychotics do not lose subject-object dualism in this fashion and become increasingly ego-centered and concerned for themselves alone. They may identify the whole with their own ego, rather than their own ego with the whole.

State of Being: The attitude necessary for mystical life "has variously been described as egolessness, overcoming pride, or dying to self" (Kallenberger, 1978, p. 179). It is not simply an altered state of consciousness, nor even a fleeting awareness of greater dimensions. Mysticism involves continually working to overcome egoism and complacency to live consistently with one's vision of the greater whole. Underhill described the mystical state of being: "It is an organic life-process, a something which the whole self does. . . . Its aims are wholly transcendental and spiritual. . . .

It is obtained neither from an intellectual realization of its delights, nor from acute emotional longings. . . . It is arrived at by an arduous psychological and spiritual process" (1911/1974, p. 81). Experiences produced other than by deliberate cultivation of a mystical path rarely lead to this kind of life stance.

Conclusions

In spite of some phenomenologically similar characteristics, the attitude or stance of the psychotic and the mystic are radically different. The major differences appear to rest upon several bases:

1) Mystics deliberately cultivate their state; psychotics are precipitated into it.

2) Mystics most commonly have growth purposes as their motivation, while defensive maneuvers define the psychotic's activity,

3) Mystics remain able to return easily to function in the world of space, time, and causality. They are able to maintain meaningful interpersonal contacts. Psychotics are unable to do these things.

4). Mysticism produces a determination to live in an awareness which makes it necessary to transcend narrow ego boundaries and self-centeredness, while psychosis typically intensifies egocentricity.

5) Mysticism apparently goes "deeper" into the realization of consciousness than does psychosis, although enroute the mystic will traverse regions also inhabited by psychotics.

In summary, mystical consciousness cannot be identified with psychopathological states. It produces growth and realization unheard of in psychopathology.

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THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Mary Carman Rose

Abstract. The holistic approach to the study of altered states of consciousness entails the endeavor to include all aspects of the content and effects of these states; all that contributes to their occurrence; and all that makes possible genuine comprehension of them. It is not a safe assumption that such an approach to these studies is always intended. The author explores the diversity of content of these experiences; diverse causes, accompaniments, effects of and diverse preparations for these experiences. She closes with some observations on the importance and the difficulty of this approach.

In the holistic approach to the study of altered states of consciousness we endeavor to encompass as far as possible in that study all that contributes to the occurrence of these states of consciousness; all aspects of their contents and effects; and all areas of inquiry which by virtue of the distinctive preparation of those who work in them contribute to these studies. It is not realistic, furthermore, to assume that the holistic approach to these inquiries is always at least implicitly intended by investigators in this area. For many studies of altered states of consciousness are marked by the superficial treatment of resemblances and differences among the states examined. And there are very few instances of attention to the intellectual and spiritual preparation requisite for comprehension of the content or effects of these states. An example is the often quoted and, as a rule, undefended statement, 'LSD is the yoga of the West'. But are the effects of the ingesting of LSD different from those produced by the Platonic ascent of the ladder of beauty or those produced by Qabbalistic spiritual development by means of adherence to a spiritual discipline which includes both the inwardness of faithfulness to God and the chanting of and meditation on the sacred names of the immanent God? And what of the demanding specialized preparation for investigation of these states?

Is it possible or even desirable, however, to encompass all features of the source, content, and effects of any one instance of altered state of consciousness? This question is a valuable one. For it is to be expected that there will be controversy about which features are relevant to the inquiry. For example, need we include any astrological features of the states of consciousness examined or of the situation in which they are examined? Some will answer 'yes'; some, 'no'; and some will ask how we might set about answering this question. In this context the important point is that 'no bell rings' to assure us that we have drawn into our inquiry all that contributes to it and have been wise in what we have omitted. One task of holistic inquiry is the explicit attempt to discern important features of the area of inquiry which hitherto have not been noted.

I. Fixing the objects of inquiry. The demands of holistic inquiry are apparent in the initial determining of which states of consciousness are altered and which are not. Although there may be states which are supranormal in respect to all persons, nonetheless what is altered state of consciousness for one person may be normal state for another. Thus, the non-artist by taking drugs, by being coached by an artist, or through development of formerly unsuspected artistic ability and perceptiveness may experience the heightened sensory awareness which is normal for the trained artist. Or by drinking a few cocktails I might become temporarily more charitable than is normal for me. I might also, however, through efforts at spiritual development become permanently charitable.

It is important from the outset to encompass the maximum variety of altered states of consciousness. This initial generosity in delineation of the area of inquiry is a safeguard against the superficiality, distortion, and reductiveness resulting from a too narrow definition of altered states of consciousness which does not provide for adequate discrimination among these states. The very real danger is that the few states which are chosen initially may not provide adequate ground for interpretation of the de facto variety of types. Thus, the investigator might decide initially to include all cases of heightened sensory perception but to exclude all cases of increased charity or intellectual (e.g., philosophical or scientific) creativity. As a result he would include in the study all cases of the opening of the 'doors of perception' whether apparently resulting from drugs or from adherence to a Zen discipline. He would, however, have omitted the Christian spiritual development which in all cases explicitly aims at increased charity and in some cases eventuates in heightened sensibility to sensory objects, whether created by art or by nature.(1)

The following is a workable initial classification of altered states of consciousness. Of course, these may occur singly or in various combinations.

(1) Alteration of normal sensory perception--e.g., synesthesia; increase in the power of one or more of the five senses; development of 'spiritual senses' as correlative to physical senses; perception of objects not normally accessible to physical senses, whether these are interpreted as hallucinations or as existing independently of the person who perceives them.

(2) Achievement of a new or deepened perception of metaphysical aspects of reality--e.g., the Zen sudden enlightenment; Buddhist nirvana or Vedantist samadhi; the Christian Platonist perspective on nature as derived from transcendent aspects of creation.

(3) Increase in capacities--e.g., increase in psychic powers; intellectual or artistic creativity; power to act in terms of one's moral and spiritual ideals and the requirements of one's metaphysico-religious commitment.

(4) New or deepened insight into other-than-human aspects of nature--e.g., the awareness of nature spirits; the presence of life or energy throughout nature; the sudden awareness that one has understood the inwardness of an animal.

(5) New or deepened insight into one's self, other persons, or human relations in general--e.g., the sudden coming of the persuasion that trust and good will are essential to one's spiritual well being and the awareness that for the moment, at least, one has increased capacities for giving this good will.

II. Aspects of altered states of consciousness to be examined. The investigator is not likely to overlook certain general features of (i) the apparent precursors of altered states of consciousness; (ii) the effects of these states; or (iii) certain obvious aspects of the individual's life which have accompanied the occurrence of these states.

1. In the foregoing I have used apparent precursor because in the establishing of the features essential to holistic inquiry it is wise initially to avoid the controversial cause and related concepts such as condition or source. For there is unclarity and consequent danger of error in the use of cause without a clear concept of the nature of causality and how it applies in this area of inquiry. In fact, however, it is not possible at the present time to use cause in any investigative context in a manner satisfactory of all philosophically trained persons. Currently the most technically developed view of causality is that provided by Hume. It is unlikely, however, that all involved in study of altered states of consciousness will accept a phenomenalist interpretation of their particular area of inquiry. On the other hand, there is currently no widely accepted realist understanding of causality.

This topic, moreover, is by no means only of philosophical import. For example, from the Humean perspective it might be apparent that the ingesting of a drug is the cause of the ensuing altered state of consciousness. This Humean approach, however, might block the road to inquiry concerning the individual's spiritual aspiration which may have been determinative of the content of his experience but which was not open to phenomenalist observation. From the realist perspective, on the other hand, we do not yet know enough about the dynamics of the self to refer to either the ingestion of the drug or the spiritual aspiration as cause with precision.

The following, then, are to be kept in mind as likely precursors of altered states of consciousness.

1. The introduction of chemicals into the body.
2. The adherence to a spiritual discipline which brings about a profound development of the self. (Recently the Hindu yoga has been universalized--e.g., Taoist yoga, Christian yoga, and the yoga of the West. I suggest that, given rigorous discrimination among the many spiritual paths, this is a legitimate

and fruitful extension of yoga. Also, I have in mind here only the spiritual development achieved by meditation, aspiration, mantras, or prayer. Of course, some communities and individuals have introduced drugs along with these disciplines, thus combining (1) and (2).

3. The experience of the extremes of emotions--e.g., great joy, deep anxiety, or profound fulfillment.

4. Identifiable physiological changes--e.g., the near-death experience or the exertion of long-distance running.

5. Sustained hope for the experience of a specific type of altered state of consciousness--e.g., the profound desire for perception of suprasensory aspects of creation; for insight into normally concealed aspects of nature; or for direct knowledge of the reality of God's love. While this aspiration may be suggestive of and is very likely to be present in the yoga disciplines, it differs from them in involving no chosen program of spiritual development.

6. Finally, some altered states of consciousness occur spontaneously, being unexpected and perhaps unwanted. Perhaps Paul's experience on the Road to Damascus is an example. And a Jewish friend wrote me of a profound sense of peace and of being loved by something immensely greater than he is and outside of him which came over him when he first visited the Wall in Jerusalem. He added, 'I was not expecting this experience; and at that moment I did not really want it. Now, however, I am grateful for it and in a state of wonder over its occurrence to me.'

ii. In holistic inquiry it is important to endeavor to encompass all discernable effects of the states of consciousness we examine. These effects differ qualitatively, largely because they affect different aspects of the self; in their duration; in their dynamics and what eventually they become; and in the value given them when they are assessed for their value when seen from various perspectives on man and reality. Thus, there are states of marked euphoria or depression which pass quickly. There is the gaining of new understanding of one's self or others which may last a few hours, a few years, or a life time. The altered state of consciousness in which one gains a new perspective on reality may be the beginning of a new life's commitment. It is important that the assessment of the value of these experiences to the individual who has them (rather than their value to research or the community) be itself a holistic judgment. That is, the experience must be judged terms of what it means to the individual by virtue of his spiritual convictions and commitment. For example, the alcoholic or drug induced charity may be judged to be genuine and, perhaps, ideal by the secular naturalist or atheistic existentialist. But the Christian who is interested in spiritual development which endures eternally and for whom this life is significant in the way in which the seeds of moral development are planted will reject alcohol or drugs as prime source of spiritual development.

iii. Current investigators of altered states of consciousness are not likely to ignore the general psychological state of the persons who have these experiences. There are attempts to gain information about whether these persons have psychological programs and how they deal with these problems. And these attempts generally include some study of the values espoused by the persons examined. I suggest, however, that this is an area needing far more penetrating and meticulous study than it is usually given. For it is essential for holistic study to determine the facts about the clarity and consistency of the individual's values and the strength of his commitment to them. Further, the individual's values frequently, though not always, are grounded in metaphysico-religious convictions. And careful discrimination of the content and consistency of these convictions ought also as a matter of course to be accepted as a central part of the study of altered states of consciousness. For these constitute the background out of which come his attitudes toward these states of consciousness--e.g., his desire for, fear of, or indifference to them. Also his metaphysico-religious convictions and commitments are the framework within which he will interpret these experiences and the milieu from which the effects of these experiences come.

Thus as altered states of consciousness the content of Hindu samadhi, Zen prajna, Buddhist nirvana, Jewish throne mysticism, and Christian, Islamic, and Plotinian union with God must be precisely distinguished from one another. Mutatis mutandis within the Christian tradition the mystical states of Franciscan, Carmelite, and Dominican spirituality likewise need to be examined for their differences as well as for their resemblances. Further, it is important that holistic inquiry examine the ineluctable roles of the individual's acceptance of any one of these views in his mode of interpretation of his altered states of consciousness.

III. Preparation for study of altered states of consciousness. Clearly the study of altered states of consciousness requires the cooperation of many disciplines--e.g., behavioral, Gestalt, Jungian, and Freudian psychology; sociology; metaphysico-religious analysis; and phenomenological, statistical, and speculative approaches to the study of psychic experiences and altered states of consciousness. The concept of the interdisciplinary study, however, is more talked about than examined holistically. And the preparation for taking part in interdisciplinary studies in general and for study of altered states of consciousness in particular has received very little attention. In fact, at least three dimensions of preparation are requisite for taking part in the interdisciplinary aspect of the study of altered states of consciousness.

First, there is needed understanding of and willingness to cooperate with the ethos of the interdisciplinary area. Each discipline of which the inter-disciplinary area is composed ideally is interpreted as contributing to and receiving from all the other areas data, perspectives on the general area and specific objects of inquiry, conclusions deriving from work already done, and suggestions for future investigation. Thus, it is important that

the person who works in any specialization which plays a part in an inter-disciplinary study understand and be willing to cooperate with the give-and-take among the diverse areas.

Second, there is needed, then, for work in any inter-disciplinary area a distinctive type of preparation in addition to that required for work in the individual contributing areas. This additional preparation is the achievement of the inter-disciplinary attitude. And this involves a holistic development of the attitudinal and axiological as well as intellectual characteristics of the investigator. By virtue of the inter-disciplinary attitude the investigator possesses a willingness--eagerness, rather--to appropriate into his inquiry all that is offered by the cooperating areas and which he is able to judge is relevant to his work.

This last is illustrated by a chain of investigative dependencies within the holistic investigation of altered states of consciousness. Thus, the inter-disciplinary attitude requires that behavioral scientists be willing to accept from phenomenological reporting modes of interpreting behavioral data which are not supplied by behavioral science per se. On the other hand, in the absence of this attitude the accepted mode of interpretation of behavioral data might be--and, in fact, often is--restricted to the investigator's undefended and, perhaps unrecognized, convictions concerning character, values, commitment, and motivation. One often hears, or at least detects, in behavioristic studies the assumption of a Hobbesian interpretation of human nature. The phenomenological studies can suggest to the behavioral investigation alternate modes of interpretation of their data which subsequently can be checked with those individuals whose altered states of consciousness are under examination. Phenomenology, in turn, requires modes of interpretation and ideally will remain open to all that is offered--e.g., those modes of interpretation deriving from Jungian, Freudian, Hindu, Hasidic, Christian Platonist, or Zen views of the mind and self. And finally, each of these possible sources of modes of interpretation of phenomenological and behavioral data and investigative conclusions is itself in need of present philosophical study. Clearly, for example, the Platonist, neo-Platonist, and Taoist elements in Jungian psychology need identification, clarification, and development.

Third, the inter-disciplinary attitude includes hope for and encouragement of creative synthesis among the disciplines which contribute to the study of altered states of consciousness. For several reasons the present intellectual climate has not been propitious for investigative creativity of this type. Some intellectual communities use generalist to name the person who undertakes synthesis among diverse areas--e.g., the contributors to the inter-disciplinary study of altered states of consciousness. And often generalist is intended to be a derogatory term, as though the generalist were known to be a thinker who willfully eschews or is not capable of the precision and detailed study of the specialized areas. And, indeed, such generalist work is an actuality.

Sometimes this thought is over-simplified generalization, lacking in depth as well as precision. And sometimes it is an attempt at creative synthesis based solely or primarily on one of the contributing areas and either treating other contributing areas superficially or ignoring them altogether.

True creative synthesis, however, will endeavor to bring together in a non-reductive, non-distorted fashion the diverse data, perspectives, conclusions, and suggestions of the several areas engaged in study of altered states of consciousness. This creative synthesis will itself require holistic preparation. It requires sufficient acquaintance with each contributing area to serve as basis for discernment of its genuine and necessarily limited service to the inter-disciplinary whole. It requires the integrity to insure that none is rejected or undervalued. And it requires the vision to create a hypothesis demonstrating how the contributing areas are related to each other to make a unified whole. To be sure, some area may not yet be sufficiently developed to make a contribution to the inter-disciplinary area, and the creative thinker must point this out. One example of such an undeveloped area in the study of altered states of consciousness is the above-mentioned philosophical study of causality. That is, we do not as intellectual community have sufficient knowledge to enable us to agree on how drugs, meditation, prayer, aspiration, and grace may each in its own way 'cause' a change in consciousness.

And as important as any feature of the inter-disciplinary attitude is the sensitivity to the correlation between method and area of inquiry. Each area of inquiry requires a method suitable to its distinctive concern. Also, we do not ever possess a priori knowledge of the method which will be fruitful in any one area. Rather, the development of method is ineluctably an important phase of investigation. In part--but only in part--this means the eschewing of a too narrow understanding of empiricism as the ideal of all investigation of altered states of consciousness. And it also means the recognition that several varieties of religious faith, understanding of reality, existential need, aspiration, and subjective experience are to be handled non-restrictively--e.g., not misconstrued so as to conform to limitations imposed by the investigators' concept of science. (2)

The gifts for an interest in creative synthesis, however, require nurturing. And this requirement calls for a change in our graduate education and professional expectations and encouragement. If at present this education and these professional attitudes encourage creativity at all, they do so only in respect to specialized areas. The student whose professors denigrate generalist work may be discouraged from taking seriously whatever spontaneous interest in creativity he may possess. Thus, in the several communities engaged in inter-disciplinary studies there is needed a willingness and ability to foster the creative thinker and his suggestions. At the very least, the creative thinker whose work is rejected may, indeed, be ahead of what his community is currently able to value. Creative advance in any area, and

specifically in the study of altered states of consciousness, awaits its own timeliness--i.e., its acceptance by the investigative community concerned with that area.

In the foregoing I have written of the essential roles of creative synthesis work in inter-disciplinary studies in general. Specifically when these comments are applied to the study of altered states of consciousness as inter-disciplinary area, there is a profound irony. What is needed for creative advance in these studies is itself an altered state of consciousness--i.e., a change from the usual exclusive interest in specialized areas and modes of inquiry. There is needed a total commitment to truth finding, leavened by the conviction that only in cooperative openness to those who, by virtue of their opportunities and preparations bring investigative gifts and perspectives different from our own, can any one of us carry on successful investigation.(3)

(1) Franciscan spirituality provides a clear instance of the heightened sensitivity to nature as accompanying Christian commitment. See, for example, St. Bonaventura, The Mind's Road to God, trans. by George Boas (New York, N.Y., Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953).

(2) Mary Carman Rose, 'Seven Dimensions of Religious Belief', Journal of the Academy of Religion and Psychic Research, Vol. 2, No. 2.

(3) Mary Carman Rose, 'The Investigative Inter-relatedness Between the Study of the Human Mind and Present-Day Philosophy', Philosophy East and West Vol. 29, No. 2.

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PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF MYSTICAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Boyce Batey: My favorite herbal tea is Red Zinger. On the label of a Red Zinger tea bag I once found the advise: "Avoid costly middlemen. Deal directly with God." and that is what we are going to do here in our discussion of mystical experiences.

The value of any knowledge, whether it be cognitive or experiential, is the extent to which it enriches and ennobles one's life. Earlier, we were involved in the cognitive aspects of experience with the exception of the moving experience which Jo Ann Beeson reported. The experience alone is less important; what is important is the fruit of that experience--the extent to which it affects how one thinks, feels, speaks, and acts. These types of experiences tend to be ineffable. Charles Baudelaire, the French poet, said "Human language is like a drunken bear trying to beat out a tune on a broken drum while all the while the heart yearns to move the stars to pity." Josiah Royce said that in the history of philosophy there are no greater empiricists than the mystics because they test the reality of which they speak in the crucible of their experience. Today we are going to talk about these experiences which are known by many names e.g., "knowing the kingdom of God", "the Hindu Samadhi", nirvana, satori, going into the blue light, illumination, the peak experience.

Twenty years and more ago, while I was in the house of my father in Miami, I was reading aloud The Prelude, the beautiful poem by William Wordsworth, in which he describes the growth of consciousness in the mind of a poet. As I read, I thought I would conduct an experiment in my own consciousness and attempt to be totally aware with all of the senses. As I sat in a chair with my feet on a hassock, eyes closed, I tried to be totally aware with all of my senses, first starting with the sense of touch--the feel of the chair on my buttocks, my arms on the chair, my shoes on my feet, the air touching my skin, the clothes on my body, the feel of my heart, my lungs, the organs in me, trying to be totally aware with all of me of the sense of touch, the totality of what touch is and the individual components of touch. And then, when I reached the point where I felt I had totally in consciousness that which was coming in through the sense of touch, I tried to hold that in consciousness while moving on to the sense of smell--the smell of the frangipani and the gardenia outside the window, of the new-mown grass and of the tar from the sun-baked road, the Acqua/Velva I was wearing that day--what was coming in totally through the sense of smell--the totality as well as the individual components. And then when I had reached a point when I was aware in consciousness of that, trying to hold that in consciousness as well as what was coming in through the sense of touch, I moved on to the sense of hearing, the sound of the engine of a far distant airpla. of cars

passing on the roadway, of back doors slamming and cars passing, of the wind in the fronds of the palm tree in the back yard and of my own inspiration and expiration and trying to be totally aware of what was coming in through the sense of sound while holding in consciousness what was coming in through the sense of smell and touch and then I opened my eyes and tried to be totally aware what was coming in through all the other senses and then what was coming in through seeing--the totality of seeing that which is normally unseen, peripheral vision, far vision, near vision, colors, textures, the beauty of the fold in my pants, the relationship between colors and textures.

While I was in the process of doing this as an experiment in consciousness as an active will of my mind, all of a sudden without my trying, without my knowing, what was happening, I was functioning in another level of awareness, my consciousness was in another plane or dimension of reality and a great white light surrounding me and was completely with me, functioning, beating, pulsating with me. I was that light, that light was I, everything out there was in here and everything in here was out there and I was part of that and that was part of me and everything out there was part of me and I was God and God was there and here and there, too. And there was in my being a sense of peace and joy and exultation in dimensions and quality that in consciousness I have never before nor since experienced. And I was aware of all of the laws and the meanings of existence, of feeling as though the drift of the Cosmos ultimately was toward good and that there was only good and no evil in the Universe, that there was no death and that all was life and life in God and that I was that. This experience lasted for only some 6 to 8 seconds but was the most profound experience of my life, an experience which ever since I have sought to regain through studying kundalini yoga, through myriad eclectic forms and types of meditation but never since have I realized that which happened then and it transformed my life. I was twenty-two at the time, but it is the single most important event in my life. It took me weeks to begin assimilating all of the meaning of it, though I knew what it was at the time.

Boyce Batey: Dr. Mary Carman Rose, Professor of Philosophy at Goucher College, spoke to you out of the left brain hemisphere this morning. Now, she will speak to you of that which has occurred burgeoning out of her right brain hemisphere.

Mary Carman Rose: Oh, I believe that God used my right and left brain hemispheres, and all of me to give me the experiences I will talk about. If I were a Buddhist or a Hindu I would give another interpretation of these experiences; because, indeed, I would have arrived at them through my own efforts at discerning what is going on in others and in nature. But since I am a Christian, I have not in any way sought these particular experiences. They came as a gift. That is, of the many mystical experiences which I have had, I have decided to talk about one type which has recurred four times. Each occasion has been a

direct discernment of a situation in which there was pain. The first time I suddenly realized that I was aware of pain within other-than-human aspects of creation. I had a tremendous sense of the yearning and groaning of a unfulfilled creation. The second time it occurred I was aware of the distress and desolation within the consciousness of a much loved family pet, a cat whom we called George Herbert. At the time I had the experience Herbie was just back from the veterinary hospital where he had had as I learned later, a traumatic experience. He had been sent home cured, but his difficulties had not been properly diagnosed; and although no one realized Herbie was dying when we brought him home. What I sensed in him was unmistakably a wordless--totally wordless--sense of terrible aloneness at having been separated from his human friends for a week. Apparently even his joy at being back home did not eclipse that memory immediately.

The third time I had this type of experience I was at 7 A.M. Mass on a weekday. During the prayers of intercession my mind wandered a bit, because I experienced a very strong desire to know and love God more than I had before. I wished that this increase of insight and love would come to me then. Instead something very different happened. Just in front of me was a woman to whom I had paid little attention, although I knew that she had had many misfortunes in her life. I perceived very clearly at that moment her disappointment in life and her loneliness. And then I realized vividly the burden we take upon ourselves when we join in the prayers of intercession, remembering and praying for the needs of others. Finally, the fourth experience of this type, just last night and in this very room. There was a circle of SFF members singing and I perceived the unfulfilled yearning of this group. It was clearly a perception of great things which could be achieved, of deep longings which had brought these people to SFF. I see Pat Fenske, the newly elected President of SFF over there. We have important work to do, Pat. My experience last night was a real mystical experience.

Boyce Batey: Our next speaker is Dr. Walter Houston Clark, the retiring President of the Academy of Religion and Psychical Research and Professor Emeritus of the Psychology of Religion from Andover Newton Theological Seminary.

Dr. Walter Houston Clark: Well, I hope I won't disillusion too many of you by saying that actually I'm a spiritual dullard and am able to experience these other realms only for the use of spiritual dynamite. My dynamite is LSD and LSD-type drugs. If I were less of a dullard, I'm sure that I could get there through meditation, but I tried that for four or five months and nothing happened so I gave it up as a bad job. What I am going to tell you about this morning is the nearest that I have ever come to a mystical experience. Peyote, as you know, is an LSD-type drug. When I took peyote with the Indians on the plains of Kansas I had what Stace would call an "extravertive"

mystical experience. To go over it very quickly, I had never attended a ceremony more impressive than this ancient ceremony that the Indians have adapted to their own views in modern times. The Indians in the United States largely have put it against a background of Protestant Christianity. In Mexico, the Indians (I just had an experience with them in January) have used these ancient ceremonies combined with Catholic Christianity.

I will tell you of my experience with the Indians who used peyote, although I will not have time to give you all the details. First we circled the altar, and then the peyote was passed out. I don't think I have ever tasted anything quite as bitter as the peyote was, so I'm really not very much worried about peyote being abused. After awhile there was chanting by the Indians. There was drumming. There were words spoken by the road chief, the chief guide in this ceremony. There was a fire meticulously tended by the Indians and incidentally, there was a great contrast between the chaos in which the Indians lived outside and their carefulness with this ceremony which they accepted as their own. I was there with four other white people and I sat there listening to the drumming, looking at the fire, watching the faces of the Indians on the other side of the tent, hearing the chanting.

About 4:00 in the morning I began to become aware of the fact that everyone was having an experience and I was the only one that was left. As I was sitting there deploring my insensitivity to all of this, suddenly the chanting, the drumming, the sight of the Indians, the sight of the fire, all kind of dissolved into a unity, into a oneness; and my sense of time completely dropped out. I don't know really whether it was 4:00 in the morning, yet I'm pretty sure because I was beginning to look at my watch and wondering when this was going to happen. But from that time on, I know that everything was dark outside of the tent and when the time came when the Indians started to finish the ceremony with a ritual breakfast meal, I suddenly noticed it was light. The night before this the Indians were very hospitable to us, calling us their white brothers and sisters and I said to myself, "How gracious." Then when we circled the altar and passed the Indians going out of the tent, suddenly I was aware that these people had become my Indian brothers and sisters. I might have used other experiences with the psychedelics which perhaps on me had a more profound impact, but I have never forgotten the experience with the Indians and looking into their faces and ever since then I have felt that my understanding of the Indians, the injustice of those things maybe my own ancestors were guilty of in the past, the way the Indians are treated, I found that it was so much easier for me to identify with these wrongs and that was the effect of the experience that lasted with me into the future.

Boyce Batey: Mary Jo Meadow, who is an Associate Professor of philosophy and psychology at Mankato State University in Minnesota and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Academy

of Religion and Psychical Research has termed herself a mystic and let's see why.

Mary Jo Meadow: I learned in the middle of the night last night that I was going to be doing this so I'm new to the idea. It dawned on me after I told Boyce that I would do this that although I have spoken privately or in small groups to people about these things and that at somebody's request wrote a paper about them which subsequently got published, I have never spoken to a large group about them and I'm not altogether sure how this is going to go. I have argued, perhaps to the dismay of some of the people in this room and others, that I think there are qualitative differences between types of these experiences and it's largely from my own personal experience that I make this argument. To me a Maslow type peak experience, what I would call a deep religious mystical experience, the experience of ecstasy, the experience of hell or psychosis all seem to me to be qualitatively distinct experiences and I speak from a base of personal experience with regard to some of these. Unfortunately, psychedelics did not take with me so I don't know what I could say about that. I tried, but it didn't work--it simply did not take--did nothing. So I'm going to try very briefly to give you a bit of a support for what I am trying to say.

With regard to a Maslow peak, perhaps the most intense of this kind of experience came when I was flying over glaciers in Alaska and I was looking out the window. The sunlight was streaming through the clouds like golden ribbons and it was landing on the ice fields below shooting up sparks of many, many different colors and I was watching it for some time conscious of the fact that I was watching it and then all of a sudden the airplane disappeared, I disappeared, nothing existed except the beauty of the light dancing up off the ice fields and it became essentially just an experience of what beauty is--that's the only way I can describe it. The next thing that I was aware of was my husband (my ex-husband now) was shaking my arm and saying, "Are you all right? You haven't moved for over 15 minutes." And that's the only indication that I have of passage of time. Time simply didn't exist in this experience for me. (By the way, at this point, I had not read anything about mysticism or peak experiences. I knew nothing about these things from a left brain perspective.) I simply turned to him and I said, "I could die happy, right now." That was about the only kind of commentary that that experience called for. That I classify as a Maslow peak and I consider it probably the lowest of the experiences that I'm going to talk about.

At a somewhat more intense level and very briefly the flavor of two different experiences, the experience of hell and psychosis and the experience of ecstasy. There have been three big occasions in my life when I have said, "Yes." These two different experiences occurred on two of these "Yes" occasions. The first of these two "Yes" occasions was when I had had a very close deep friendship with a Catholic priest. It had been a genuine friendship, spiritual bonding-sharing, that had gone on for over two years, and he got word that he was going to be transferred to

the Missions. This made us realize the depth of our attachment to each other; and the evening that he came to tell me about this for the very first time in our relationship, we wound up touching each other physically and came very close to going to bed with each other. But the reality of our situation--I, a married woman and he a priest and the unacceptability of these things to us--stopped us. At that point, he begged me. He said, "I could very easily give up my priesthood and all that I have devoted my life to, you know that, please help me. Please don't let that happen." The next day I wound up in church knowing that I could have this man, that I had the power to seduce him away from what he had chosen as his life's task, but feeling at the same time that I would destroy something important in both of us if I did this. It was an intense struggle. I was hours struggling to try to get myself to say, "Yes, I will let him go without attempting to seduce him." I was finally able to say that "Yes" and an ecstasy took possession of me that is virtually undescrivable. I was as if glued to God, penetrated through by God, bursting, filled, overflowing. I walked out of that church and carried that with me for three or four days before it started fading. I was living in two worlds at the same time. I was conscious of everything that was going on in my every day life and able to function in it yet in such a place apart and removed from it that things like the ordinary irritants like the loudness of the stereo music that my ex-husband insisted on playing and that normally had made me irritable could not touch me. This I consider an experience of ecstasy and it was a rather lengthy one.

The experience of hell or psychosis that I had also occurred in connection with a relationship. It was the ending of another relationship that was important to me. This was my third big "Yes". The first one I haven't told you about--that other one was the second one. The relationship ended. I really had no control over this situation but I was fighting and kicking and screaming about it asking "Why me, why do I always seem to get left with the short end of the stick often when it comes to small human happiness that anyone would like to have." I wound up in a hotel room that night. All of a sudden, a head opening opened up vast emptiness, aloneness, and isolation and somehow inside of me I got the feeling that I had to say "Yes" to that, if it was to be that. I wound up aware of the fact that I was letting myself get in a bad state but feeling unwilling to stop it. I curled up in a little ball in a fetal position, rocking back and forth and I was moaning. I vaguely remember that I was saying, "I can't say "Yes", but I can't say "No". I was caught in an internal awful malady of being unable to say yes to it, unable to say no to it. This went on for hours, this agony of this whole experience of not being able to say yes or no. During the course of it, as I said, I was in my fetal position, my moaning, my walking, I went through being prostrate on the floor face down and begging. It was really a partially self-induced mini psychotic experience. I finally got my yes said and of course it was then transformed with the yes into a short, not like the other one, short period of ecstasy like just the calm and the peace after the storm after that.

Boyce Batey: We're running out of time.

Mary Jo Meadow: Oh, all right. There is not much to say about this one. It occurred after I had spent years being depressed and wrestling for conviction and certainty with regard to religious faith and I finally gave up asking for certainty and just said, "I'll take it as it is--no certainty." I can't say anything about this experience except that it was seeing God in darkness, hearing God in a void, experiencing God in a vacuum, but no experience about it. When I came out of that, I was a different person and since we are running out of time, I will let it go at that.

Boyce Batey: It has been said that all mystics come from the same country and speak the same language. We've seen selfless service which is the action component of love, an orientation to one's fellow man coming out of this experience. William Blake has said that when the doors to perception are cleansed, all appears as it is, infinite. Earlier in the day Zen koans were mentioned. A Zen koan is a statement that cannot be resolved with the intellect, you strive, but can't, and then intuitively you go beyond into the experience of satori. My favorite Zen koan is, "How long does it take a cross-eyed flea with a cork leg to kick the seeds out of a dill pickle?" (Laughter) What is really happening in these mystical interludes? Dr. Andrew Greeley, a Catholic priest in Chicago who is a sociologist, has made a study and wrote an article in the January 26, 1975 issue of the New York Times Magazine in which he said 4 out of every 10 Americans have had a mystical experience. The article was entitled, "Is America a Nation of Mystics?" In that article, he said in answer to the question, "What really happens in mystical interludes?"--"We think they are episodes of intense and immediate cognition in which the whole personality of a person is absorbed in an intimate though transient relationship with the basic forces, cycles and mechanisms at work in the Universe and in his own psychosomatic component--gravity, cosmic rays, light, heat, electromagnetism, cycles of breathing, circulation, digestion, day, year, life, death." These are the mystical experiences. But on to the Lazarus syndrome, a transformative state of consciousness that has garnered growing interest since the initial break through work of Dr. Raymond Moody. The Lazarus syndrome, near-death, clinical death or thanatomimetic experience. On our panel is a young man who has had a most extraordinary near-death experience--extraordinary in its transformative effect. He goes to theological schools, colleges, and universities speaking of this experience. Rick Bradshaw is a Sophomore at the University of Missouri in Kansas City where he studies art. He is also on the Board of Directors of the Association for the Scientific Study of Near-Death Experiences. You're going to have now the benefit of hearing his experience.

Rick Bradshaw: It began November 14, 1975. I had just moved to Peoria, Illinois where I had planned to get a job in a hospital; I took a part-time job in a nearby grocery store

while I was waiting for an opening. My job there was to sack groceries, just like any grocery store you go to; and on this particular day I was out loading groceries into the trunk of a car when suddenly from behind another car came and ran into the rear end of the car standing behind, crushing my legs. The car then backed up and as I felt my knees with my legs crushed, the car then came forward again and crushed my abdomen between the two cars.

By the time I arrived at the hospital, my blood pressure was 30 over zero and the last thing I remember was the doctor ordering blood and then I went into shock. I was taken to the operating room, despite the fact that many of the doctors didn't think I'd live that long. The next thing I remember after this long period was a sudden flash of light and after the flash of light I found myself floating directly above the right-hand side of my body. Below I could see the doctors working, heard the conversation which was going on as they were trying to clamp off my vena cava artery which had been transected.

After staying there, watching what was going on in the room, I noticed that there was someone behind me with their hands on my shoulders. As soon as I noticed this person, we started traveling through another form of darkness which resembled a tunnel even though it didn't seem to have any walls or any bit of solidness but it seemed to have boundaries. We followed this tunnel and at the end of the tunnel we came to a room. This room was about half the size of this room and the walls were whitish-gray and again they seemed to have boundaries but didn't seem to be really solid. I stayed in the center of the room where there was a small podium and place behind it and also in the room were several bookshelves and several people were moving about the room. To the right-hand side of me were many of my family which I had known previously that had died and other people that knew me who had died. As I stood there waiting, it was as if the wonderful feeling that I received was just terrific, it was nothing like I have ever felt before and I noticed beautiful music coming from somewhere and it was just the most beautiful thing I have ever heard and even one of the persons who was moving around the room made a comment about it. I stood there for what seemed like quite a long time and then as if on some kind of unheard cue everyone moved to a certain part of the room and stopped and at that point from the fourth left-hand corner of the room another person was there.

And this person had a bright glow about him. It was so bright you could almost not look at it. Yet it was the kind of light that engulfs you; and the warmth and the love which I felt from that light were almost as if I could put my arms around this person. I could be completely absorbed by the love from this being. He came to the center of the room directly facing me and not in a verbal sense but in a telepathical sense he said, "Do you know where you are?" And I said "Yes". And he said, "And what is your decision?" At that moment, everything that had ever happened in life, I automatically knew it right down to the smallest detail. And one of the

things I realized was that I had gone through life not thanking people for when they helped me out or not expressing love like I should; and so I felt there was a need that I should do that so I looked back at him and I said, "I must return." And he said, "Why, aren't you pleased with what we have here?" And I said, "Yes, but I must go back and repay those people who have done good things for me and to express more love." And he seemed kind of puzzled by this at first but then he raised his hands above his head and he said, "If you must return, I give this as a gift to face obstacles which you will be facing." And it was as if the ceiling kind of opened up and I saw a panoramic view of time on earth from the beginning to the end of time as we know it on earth. Then after seeing this, I found myself in the same room and he said, "So you will not go about boastfully telling about these things, you will only know their coming just before their happening. And he said, "Remember, as I have said before, do not cast your pearls before the swine." And right after he said that, there were the hands on my shoulders and back through the tunnel and found myself in another period of darkness and woke up in my hospital room.

Boyce Batey: Rick, could you explore in some detail what effects this experience had on your life and how it has affected you as a person, the transformative effects it has brought?

Rick Bradshaw: The one thing I have come to realize from the entire experience, the things which I saw and have come to know, is that many times we go throughout life taking a lot of things for granted, sometimes maybe it's just small details, but mostly it's the way we treat each other and the way we think of each other and many times we don't have the patience we should for our fellow man. And one of the ways it has changed me is that I have learned to have more patience with my fellow man and I have tried to express more love. It also changed my outlook toward religion. I don't have any fear of death. Many times I even look forward to the time when I die again because if someone asked you what reality is, I would say that was reality and this is more or less a stage play which we must all act out in order to decide if we can live in that reality.

Boyce Batey: Rick, Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, *who by herself* did secret research for 5 years, feared that if people were aware of the meaning of this experience, that there is life after death, that many people would commit suicide. That was her concern. You mentioned that you look forward to your dying again. Having had this experience, would you commit suicide?

Rick Bradshaw: Boyce, no, I wouldn't commit suicide. One thing I felt and still do, is that suicide is a cosmic no-no. It's something you shouldn't do.

Eugene Thomas: I was curious to know if the other panel members could say the long-term effects of their experience.

Mary Jo Meadow: Well, I had all my life been drawn to religious and spiritual interests. So it didn't change anything

in that regard. What happened after my initial religious experience of this kind was that people started coming to me and I started talking to them and I have the feeling, this went on for a number of years, and this is about all I did. I have the feeling that as if something went through me then from me to them and I guess I was serving as a therapist without really realizing it. For years this went on. I went back to school after that to learn how to do what I was already doing and spent less time in doing that. That was the immediate most pronounced thing that happened.

Boyce Batey: And with me, I could not doubt the validity of my senses. This was real for me and because it was real, I have a knowledge of a deeper reality than that which I see with my physical senses. I'm dissatisfied with the forms and rituals of religion; the essence of religion for me is this knowing at first hand.

Mary Carman Rose: My mystical experiences have made a Christian of me. On the other hand, I never forget that Christ said, "Blessed are those who believe not having seen." I think that within Christianity having faith without the mysticism is a higher vocation.

Oh, yes. I have had a great many experiences. But I want to confess that I am able to be a Christian because of my many mystical experiences of many types. But I've taken for my slogan "Blessed are those who believe, not having seen." I think that's a higher state.

Walter Clark: My experiences changed my attitudes. However, I had another experience which I would describe as catharsis in which, although I did not think I was dying, this was under the Mexican mushroom, I faced the problem of death and at the time death became for me a kind of a festival. That's the only way I can explain it. And subjectively, I became aware of the fact that birth and death were very similar. They are just two ends of the same continuum. Now, after that experience, I suddenly found my life taking on an added zest and interest, even my appetite improved. When I try to explain it to myself the only way I can explain it is that I had never realized I was afraid of death. That is, at the drop of a hat I could have given everybody a lecture about how nobody need to fear death. But apparently I had been wasting a lot of energy hiding this fact from myself and after this experience, there was no need to hide anything about it and the energy that I was wasting on repression was then available for living. Let's see, that was back in 1974 and this interest in living is still with me.

Boyce Batey: Those who have had these kinds of experiences would tell you that they are to be sought, these states of consciousness, above all other things. All other things. And in attempting and striving for these kinds of experiences, the spiritual disciplines of meditation, contemplation, prayer, and

selfless service are the ones that bring one toward these states. But if you spend a whole life and never have one of these very dramatic type of bright white light and illumination type of experiences your goal is still realized in the striving. As Lao Tzu said, "The best way to do is to be."

SUMMARY STATEMENT AND VIEWS FOR THE FUTURE

Elizabeth Fenske

Boyce Batey: During our conference Rev. Fenske has listened to all presentations. She has analyzed, critiqued, and synthesized them. Pat will now give us a summary with some views for the future.

Elizabeth Fenske: Many long days I have tried to figure out how this would work. In typical Jungian style, I had a dream. In typical patient style, I forgot the dream. However, I've tried to figure out an outline. At this moment, I am bordering, however, on insanity and the people back there thought I was having a minipsychotic episode a few minutes ago, I am sure. The insanity is for letting Boyce convince me to try to do this. In all seriousness, I would like to try to pull brief statements from all the presentations, then secondly, I would like to try to reflect for just a few moments with ideas for the future.

As you all know, our conference on mystical experience and other transformative forms of consciousness was opened for us last night by that great scholar and friend of us all, Walter Houston Clark. We now know that because of his background in literature he brings a great deal to an understanding of this field and is able to quote for us from that background beautiful words of Carlyle. He pointed out to us that Carlyle's transcendence came to him after a period of suffering and self-pity following his rejection of religious beliefs. I had a flash today as Mary Jo was talking at the luncheon that there is some kinship there for Walter Houston Clark also. And I have found it interesting as we've listened to the presentations here that in some ways it may just be that that period of suffering a self-pity where we reject that which we have held onto as being sacred but has lost its meaning because of its institutional structure is that which is the predecessor of transcendent experiences for us. Walter Houston Clark shared with us a number of triggers of mysticism: that beautiful analogy of the sea; the unconscious element of the water and of nature; fasting; reading about mysticism; contemplating. He went on to say that mystical experience may or may not be a genuine religious experience; although I think it is clear that he feels that it really is. There is one question that he raised about a genuine religious experience and I think that one of the questions that we may look at some day is what is the distinction between a genuine religious experience and genuine mystical experience. The thrill of Walter Houston Clark's paper can always resonate with us when we hear again the words of William Blake: "To see the world in a grain of sand and the heaven in a wild flower; hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour." Thank you Walter Houston Clark.

Dick Batzler: responded for us in a very meaningful way to Walter's presentation and Dick shared with us that genius that is only his that can take us to the root or to the radical part of a work and help us understand what words mean. He brought us to the realization of looking again at the meaning of transcendancy which literally is to climb beyond or to ascertain above and then transformation which is to change or alter the direction in which we have been going. Dick spoke in terms of all of us being capable of mystical experiences. He shared with us some thoughts about Whitehead and some of the Roman Catholic background of purgation, illumination and union as steps along the way.

At 8:00 this morning Mary Jo Meadow presented her paper, "Mystical Consciousness: Realization or Psychopathology?" She said such a model of consciousness suggests that schizophrenia or other psychotic experiences have much in common with mystical ones. However, the deeper mystical states involve a transcendence of subject -- object dualism that is not usual in psychosis and that appears to go beyond psychotic realms of consciousness. It does not rule out using a psychotic episode as a springboard to explore deeper mystical levels of consciousness. She closed with a set of conclusions that in spite of some form of markedly similar characteristics, the attitude or stance of the psychotic and the mystic are radically different and for her there were major differences. Mystics deliberately cultivate their state, psychotics are precipitated into it. Possibly for the mystic it is an integrating state; for the psychotic it is a disintegrating state. One is unifying and one is frightening. Mystics most commonly have growth purposes as their motives while defensive maneuvers define the psychotic's activities. Mystics remain able to return easily to function in the world of space, time and causality. They are able to maintain meaningful interpersonal contacts; and psychotics are unable to do these things. Mysticism produces a determination to live in an awareness which makes it necessary to transcend narrow ego boundaries and self-centeredness while psychosis typically intensifies egocentricity. Mysticism apparently goes deeper to the realization of consciousness than does psychosis although in root the mystic will traverse regions also inhabited by psychosis. In summary mystical consciousness cannot be identified with psychopathological states. It produces growth and realization unheard of in psychopathology. An occasional psychotic may, however, succeed in developing mystical awareness.

Frank C. Tribbe and JoAnn Beeson were both concerned with transformed states of consciousness. Frank concluded with: "I suggest a more careful consideration in future consciousness research of the techniques of non-hypnotic regression for two reasons: it avoids the objections of many persons to conventional hypnosis and it holds promise as a simple avenue to transformed states of consciousness. JoAnn ended with this paragraph: "The psychedelic experience can provide new insights and approaches to Deity or perhaps just new personal confirmations to old universal truths. If we examine the psychedelic experience along side of the traditional religions mystical experience, there are similarities and if we recognize that mystical religious

experience is transforming, then we may conclude that psychedelic experience of the mystical nature can be transforming." Gene Thomas, in presenting evidence of near-death and intensive spiritual experiences, used a sample of a questionnaire for 305 persons. He pointed out that in the middle group, which was the age group of people between 30 - 59, 32% had spiritual experiences. The question was raised, "Is it possible that near-death experiences can be determined by certain personality types?" There seemed to be a correlation between near-death experiences and the possibility that this would lead to religious experiences. We may also ask: Is it possible that near-death experience in correlation with personality types has anything to do with the possibility of a spectrum of the hysteric in the obsessive personality?

Mary Carman Rose shared with us a beautiful paper on a holistic approach to the study of altered states of consciousness. She said that for her there are five types of such states: alteration of normal sensory perception; achievement of new or deeper perception of metaphysical aspects of reality; an increase in capacities for love, artistic creativity, or moral commitment; new or deeper insight into other-than-human aspects of nature; and new or deepened insights into one's self, other persons, or human relations in general. She also suggested that there is needed willingness to cooperate in interdisciplinary areas; understanding that there is need for preparation for interdisciplinary work beyond what is needed for specialized work; and understanding that this additional preparation is primarily an attitudinal one which requires particularly an openness to what others are discerning and emphasizing.

Next, it was fascinating to listen to the accounts of those who shared with us their mystical experiences. Very often individuals are fearful of sharing these experiences. They are fearful that they will not be able to express them to others. And sometimes the experiences cannot be adequately expressed because they are deep within us. We are grateful to all who told us of their experiences.

Kenneth Ring told us of empirical evidence that supported a common pattern of transcendent experiences that frequently occur when individuals find themselves at the threshold of death. Ken thinks that these experiences are very much the same for all persons who have them, regardless of what brings the individual to the point of death. Ken is interested in studying them for their import for spiritual development. John White suggested that reality is unchanging but that our perception of reality changes. He also stressed the fact that the process of enlightenment is a gradual one. Finally, we met three additional interpretations of mystical experiences and of man's relation to reality in the paper by Father Culligan on St. John of the Cross and the responses to him by Eric Carlson and Alan Anderson.

What do I see for the future? First, I think that we need to look at the possibility of more of a blending together of our feelings of separateness and differences into some kind of transcendent totality. Second, we need to foster speculative dialogue with material and life scientists. There is, for example, the suggestion that, although we are outwardly occupied with our activities, we must recognize that our real job in the universe is to become more awake at the level of spirit. This sounds like Eric Carlson, doesn't it? Third, I think that we need during the next 5 to 10 years to do some interdisciplinary work in the area of neurology and physiological research in the study of glandular structure. We need to try to understand the roles of the glands in religious, mystical, and altered states of consciousness. Fourth, we need more evidence concerning mind induced states of consciousness, in particular anger and rage. That is, we need to study states of destruction in which the psychotic often finds himself. We pay a great deal of attention to the states that are on a constructive level, but we need to do more investigation of those that come out of anger, rage, destruction. Fifth, perhaps we need more attention to the possibility that we are now at a turning point in our study of altered states of consciousness, and that this turning point has to do with the imperative need for new modes of investigation and more speculation.

I see some questions and issues which we may stress in the future. What is the way in which the psyche or unconscious repository of us functions? What effects does the practise of spiritual discipline have on our conscious living in this day and age. It is really the numinous which is the purifier? How shall we understand time and space in order to account for transformative states of consciousness? What are the proper relations between the mystic and the scientist?

The common factor for me in all such states is the presence of an experience that gives the sensation of integration rather than that of fragmentation. And there is something that plagues me daily, while I suspect that it plagues many of you, too. This is the possibility of some day knowing more fully the mystical or transformative states during our every day life. Though this may sound naive, I think that at times we do approach this experience, when transcendence reigns, the shackles of division fall away, and we do not find polarities. Then we find only the complementary whole when the rational is not dormant nor the intuitive dominant. Instead there is a marriage of the two.

I guess if I had to use an analogy to express it, I would use the analogy of the amoeba where from the one comes the two; but yet in that which is the two is the potential of the one. Neither has the one lost its potential for the two nor has the two lost its for the one. I think in the future we need to try to recognize that which balances us is some type of androgynous nature on this plane of existence. It is not reserved for special

times. It could be there for us all if we could move to that place where we think deeply and feel intensely at the same time, where we lose sight of doing either but we are doing both. It is there that we experience the whole in a new and whole way. It is like we speak out of two sides of our mouths at the same time but yet have the meat in the center. In that great Taoist text the Tao Te Ching these words are recorded, "The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao." Carl Jung once said "Go not without, truth lies within the inner man." To become conscious is to become aware of the other half, to acquire knowledge of a part that is missing. Consciousness consists in taking possession though knowledge of a free determined whole. Only when the missing part has been assimilated into consciousness is the desire for wholeness satisfied and at rest and only then is the negative side of tension resolved. This, my friends, is the crux of the matter. Can transformative states be either in the realm of the human or the divine? Probably they can and they can be on two planes of existence.

Nothing that we have heard this weekend is really radical or new. Most of it has been said many, many times before. All we do is we regroup things together and say them over again. Some times we say them in riddles and often times I am reminded of the quote that is in the front of that beautiful little book Light of a Thousand Suns: "It is not understood by those who understand it. It is understood by those who do not understand it." And I think we all find ourselves in that spot in times like this.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for your participation in making this symposium a joyful experience. It has certainly been a joy to have this symposium in honor of the work of Walter Houston Clark. To the respondents, to the presenters and also most of all to all of you people that have responded by sitting and being with us, we extend our thanks for we all know that in the future it is by their fruits that we will know them. I would like to ask at this time the person who has served in the past as Chairman of the Program Committee and who is with us today to close. I have asked Harmon Bro if he will share a word with us and dismiss us.

Harmon Bro: Will you stand. A benediction was originally not a formal rite but just a sending forth and that is all I'm going to do and remind you of the image that Gerald Heard created when he said we live in a time when the saint and the engineer sit on opposite sides of the table and stare at each other incomprehensibly. There is pain in that and what we have to do from time is to go forth carrying that pain and yet building a peace that calls to life the possibilities of life. The Academy is about that. Go in that troubled peace. Amen.

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